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# TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS

(PRE-EXISTENCE AND REBIRTH)

A FACTUAL ACCOUNT

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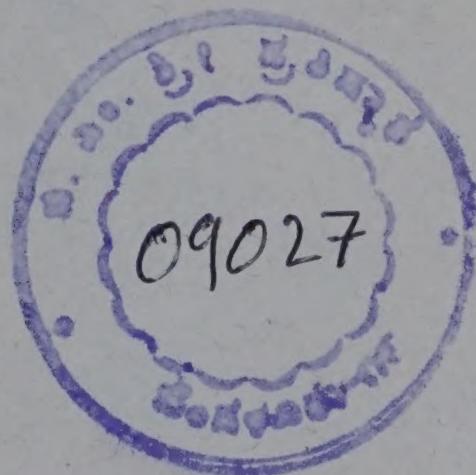
By  
K. S. SHIVARAM



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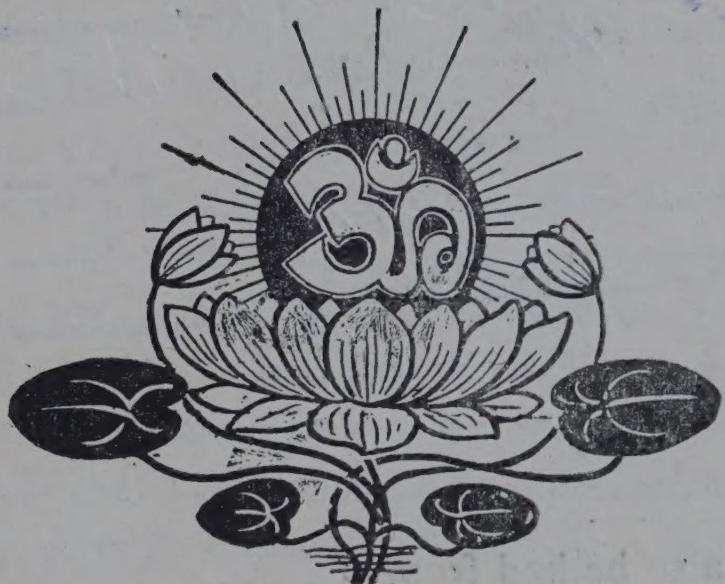
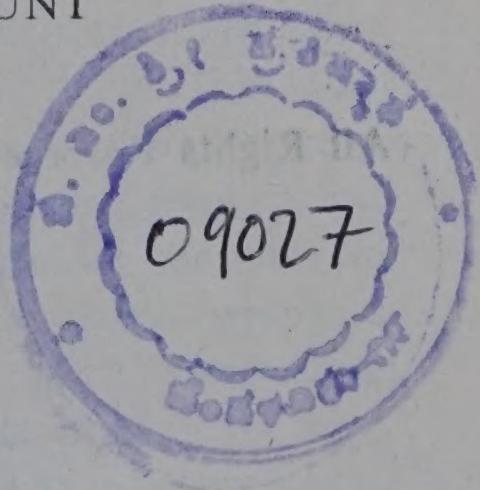




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(PRE-EXISTENCE AND REBIRTH)

A FACTUAL ACCOUNT



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*By*

S. K. SHIVARAM

November 1971

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## PREFACE

Transmigration of souls and Pre-existence are facts. If it were not so, and it were to be argued that One's actions in a previous life have no manner of influence on his present one, it should follow that the good or bad effects of whatever one does, are reaped in his own life time; and if this was so, the experiences of all persons in similar circumstances at any particular point of time should have to be identical in nature, as all men would be entering the world, unfettered by any backlog of past sins or virtues. Actual experience, however, is that it is not so. No two lives are similar. Even twins born at the same moment of the same parents, and with the same features and faculties, develop different natures and go through different experiences, altogether dissimilar to each other. This naturally leads to the questions as to why such differences occur. The only rational answer would be that the sorrows and pleasures that every individual experiences in this life, are in some manner conditioned by his actions in a previous one. Actually one's behaviour in his past lives sows the seeds of his experiences in his one, and in turn, his conduct in this life determines his experiences in future lives. Thus, every individual goes through a cycle of lives, in the manner of a continuous chain, his experience in each succeeding life being linked with his actions in the previous ones, and in turn determining his conduct and experience in future lives.

It is given to man, endowed as he is with the power to acquire knowledge and with a sense of discrimination, to alter to some extent, the course of this chain reaction, by

following the path of virtue and devotion in preference to that of selfishness and sensual pleasure.

Just as the darkness of mid-night gradually yields to the mellowness of the morning, and, then, in turn to the brilliance of the mid-day sun, so also one who is ensnared by ignorance, can attain the blissful heights of self knowledge and peace by suitable endeavour. In this endeavour three influences are of great assistance; the first is the benign guidance of a Guru, the second is the grace of God and the third is the rare companionship of refined souls. One may say at once that God's grace should take the first place in the list, but as the Great Maharshi Narada has said, the benevolent guidance of an enlightened Guru is even more essential and potent and it has therefore been placed first. In this the words of Narada Maharshi himself, even if one may enjoy God's mercy to some extent, it is only the guidance of an Enlightened Guru that can open out immense possibilities of attaining self-knowledge. It is the Guru that guides his pupil in the path of righteousness rather than that of ignorance; It is the Guru that propounds the knowledge of self, and it is Guru again that demonstrates in his own life the path of virtue ordained by the scriptures and so sets his pupil a concrete example to follow.

In point of fact it is the teachings of the Guru that shape the pupil's character so as to make him fit to receive the grace of God. It is for this reason that Saint Narada has so highly extolled the importance of a Guru's guidance.

It is due indeed to the grace of such a Guru that Shri Yadathore Subbaraya Sharma was able to recollect in this

life, the places, circumstances and experiences of his past lives, and the sins he had then committed. It is fortunately the same grace that enabled him to expiate these sins by profound suffering in this life, and, after such expiation, to receive in this very life the merciful grace of God and to acquire knowledge of the self. It is the sheer force of his faith in God and Guru, though he is not learned in the technical sense that enabled him to attain this supreme knowledge.

Shri Yadathore Subbaraya Sharma's life provides an excellent illustration of the truth of the doctrines of pre-existence and the way how one's actions in a particular life time determine his experiences in the next and succeeding ones and how, with the grace of an enlightened Guru, all sins can be atoned, and the knowledge of self realised.

It is for this reason that many of the followers of Shri Yadathore Subbaraya Sharma expressed an earnest wish that he should leave on record a brief account of his life for the benefit of those aspiring to knowledge of the supreme. Sri Subbaraya Sharma was at first unwilling to accede to this request, as by nature, he is averse to self-glorification, and having attained his 88th year, was only looking forward to the day of his release from this existence. On their insistent persuasion, however, he agreed, as he felt that even if the slightest good might result by his leaving a record of his experiences, it would be worth while. He accordingly went on reciting the incidents of his life from the beginning upto the date of writing this i.e.. his 89th year, which have been recorded faithfully in these pages.

The work of recording the incidents was undertaken by Shri K.S. Shivaram, Stores Officer of Bharath Electronics, and Shri Seshachalam, Deputy Engineer in the same organisation. As the subject of this brief biography is not so much the chronicle of an individual's life as an illustration of the continuity of life from generation to generation, the book has been deliberately entitled "Pre-existence - The fruits of Guru's Grace".

Shri Yadathore Subbaraya Sharma lives in No. 30, Sampige Road, Malleswaram, Bangalore-3.

No. 111, East Park Road,  
Malleswaram, Bangalore-3.

*Sd/- K. S. Shivaram,  
S. Seshachalam*

### TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The original of this Book which is a faithful compilation of events recounted by Shri Subbaraya Sharma himself, is written in Kannada, and reflects the language in which the recital was made. Some of Shri Subbaraya Sharma's devotees felt that it would be desirable to bring out an English Translation of it for the benefit of non-Kannada knowing persons having an interest in such matters. This book is the result.

The translation has been done by one of Shri Subbaraya Sharma's admirers, who was great veneration for his age and personality. If the translation conveys some idea of this personality and the profound thoughts that the events in his life have inspired, the translator feels fully gratified. If it fails to do so, the fault is entirely that of the translator. He humbly requests the readers pardon for all its shortcomings, which are many.

*Sd/- B.N. Rama Rao  
Government of Mysore, Retired Asst. Secretary*

# **TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS**

**( Pre-existence and Rebirth )**

**A FACTUAL ACCOUNT**

About 23 miles from Mysore City on the Banks of the sacred river Kaveri, there was a old town of Yedathore. Within the area which comprised the site of this town, there is an ancient temple consecrated to Sri Arkeshwara Swamy and his holy consort Meenakshi Devi. Sri Subbaraya Sharma was born in this town in the year 1883A.D. His father was Sri Ramanna, a pious Brahmin devoutly performing his daily duties. Shri Subbaraya Sharma lost his father in his eighth year, and was brought up by his mother. The family had a small plot of land for sustenance. He had three brothers, all of whom passed away before he was 16, leaving him as the only son of his bereaved mother. His early education was in the town of his birth. He completed his Kannada Lower Secondary there, and, as it had no English School at the time, he would have had to proceed to Mysore to continue his studies. As the family did not have sufficient means to meet the expenditure which that would involve Sri Subbaraya Sharma had to remain for two to three years without any further education Some years later, the water-spread of K.R. Sagar Reservoir constituted a danger to the town of Yedathore and it was therefore shifted from its original site,

and re-named Krishnaraja Nagara, with the result that both the name and the place no longer exist.

One of Shri Subbaraya Sharma's relations viz., Shri B. Seetharamaiah was manager of the Chief Electrical Engineer's Office in Bangalore at that time. This gentleman gave his ten year old daughter in marriage to Shri Subbaraya Sharma who was then 16 years of age. This was of course a child marriage. Thereafter Shri Seetharamaiah brought his young son-in-law over to Bangalore. Shri Subbaraya Sharma's English education commenced after his arrival in Bangalore, and within three or four years thereafter, he came up to the 5th form, High School Standard. About this time he suddenly caught plague. Providentially, however, he got over the disease which was unique thing at that time as this epidemic was usually fatal. But he had hardly got over this disease when he fell ill with typhoid fever, which ran a course of 40 days. As a result of this, both his eyes became dim, and he found himself incapable of reading or writing. Though all known cures were tried during the next one or two years, they were of no avail. Four years later, however, all of a sudden, the eyes became clear of their own accord, and his sight was fully restored. This was in his 24th year, and it is to be recorded that even to-day, though 64 years have since lapsed, his eye-sight remains as keen as it was then, and he does a remarkable amount of reading and writing for his age. Being 24 years of age then, and being married also, he had discontinue further studies and to look for some means of livelihood. About this time, he was offered the post of a clerk in the Comptro-

ller's Office, and joined it. The rather exacting routine of an official position did not however, come in the way of his continuing to perform, as before, his daily rites as a pious Brahmin. With renewed faith in God and respect for elders, he used to attend to his duties as a householder.

There was nothing eventful so far in his life. Sri Subbaraya Sharma had a brother-in-law (wife's sister's husband) Shri M.A. Ramaswamy, who at the time was Superintendent in the General & Revenue Secretariat, as the Government Secretariat was then called. This gentleman was an extremely pious Brahmin. Though he was a Government servant, he used to tend the sacred fire at home every day, and never gave up the daily worship of the family Gods in the manner ordained by the Scriptures. On a particular day in the month of March 1917, this pious gentleman had invited the famous Swamiji named Sri Ramananda Saraswathi, who was then camping in Bangalore, to visit his house and perform special pooja of the Holy Mother, Durga. This Swamiji was a devotee of the Holy Mother and was reputed to have realised Her presence in person. Shri Ramaswamy invited Shri Subbaraya Sharma to his house to participate in the pooja. Needless to say the invitation was readily accepted. As the pooja extended until late in the night, Shri Subbaraya Sharma slept that night in his brother-in-law's house, and was introduced to the Swamiji. Though Sri Subbaraya Sharma was not learned in the Shastras, he had a deep-seated faith in God and in the sacred Rishis. He, therefore, looked upon Shri Ramananda Saraswathi with great reverence and from that

time afterwards, so long as the Swamiji remained in Bangalore, was frequently going to his camp and seeking his darshan and enlightenment.

Even after the Swamiji left Bangalore on visits to Maddur, Mysore, Chamundi Hills, and other places, Shri SubbarayaSharma and his brother-in-law Shri Ramaswamy used to go together to seek his blessings. On one such visit to Nanjangud, he was introduced to another Swamiji, viz, Shri Sambasadashivananda Teertha Swamiji, who had come from Sringeri. In the month of Ashada of the year Kalayukti, corresponding to the year 1918, Shri Ramananda Saraswathi settled down in the temple of Shri Theertha Rameswara, which is located in the midst of a number of Hills in Chikkanayakanahalli Taluk of Tumkur District. The very next month i.e., Shravana (August or so, according to the English Calendar) Shri Ramaswamy felt an urge to see the Swamiji and so took Shri Subbaraya Sharma also with him to Theertha Rameswara. They camped there for two days. While staying there, the Swamiji took both Shri Subbaraya Sharma and Shri Ramaswamy to the sacred temple of Sapta Matrikamba which is about a mile and a half from Theertha Rameswara.

It might be appropriate at this stage to describe in some detail the location of Theetha Rameswara and Sapthamahrikamba temples and the history of the place.. Chikkanayakanahalli is a Taluk in the Tumkur Disttict of Mysore State. About three miles from Chikkanayana-halli town there is a range of medium-sized hills. This range starts from a hill about 12 miles south of Chikka-

nayakanahalli on which there is a sacred temple consecrated to Sri Narasimha Swami (Kiggada Narasimha Swamy Temple). This hill and temple are close to Bangalore-Honnavar Road, and can be seen as one passes on it to Tiptur. Near this place, a branch road takes off for Chikkanayakanhalli which, as stated already is about 12 miles away. This range of hills is not a continuous one, but is broken in some places with intervening open spaces, and with cutters of hills at others. In between some of the hills there are plains stretching for about a mile or two and between others there are deep valleys and ravines. This range proceeds further on to Hosadurga and Chitradurga. Wherever there are plains in between two hills small villages have come up, with a few houses each. The hilly tracts are covered with scrub jungles, in some of which wild animals, like tigers, cheetas, bears and wild boars have made their abode.

The temple of Shri Theertha Rameswara Swami can be approached by a foot path passing over the high hill to the east of Chikkanayakanahalli town. The temple is just about a mile from the valley on the other side of this Hill. Another hill starts right from the spot where the temple is situated, and extends eastwards. The temple is thus located in the low-lying valley between these two hills. As the space available is narrow, there is an open yard of just about 30 ft. width in front of the temple, and about 20 ft. below a perennial stream flows in the valley. All the rain water that gathers on the hills is drained into this stream. In consequence, even in summer there will be some water in the stream. As the surface of these hills is covered with

ferrous soils, the water that flows over it is always clear and healthy. The temple itself is not a big affair. It is very small. The prakara arround it is built with rough stones. In this temple are installed a linga consecrated to Shri Rameswara, an image of the Holy mother in the form of Balarajeswari, and the idols of Shri Ganapathi, Shri Vishnu and Shri Aditya. The temple is situated in the midst of hills and scrub jungles. There are no arrangements for daily worship; devotees perform their own poojas. The people of the entire area attach special sanctity and potency to this place. The long lines of dilapidated foundations still remaining bear witness to the existence of a populous township close to the temple in bygone days. Moreover, even to-day, there stands a solid house built of granite slabs, evidently intended for the occupation of the Palegar of the place, whenever he came to offer worship. This place is called Theertha Rameswara. Owing to its location in a valley surrounded by jungles and visited by winds from all directions, the place is very cold. It is therefore also called "Cold Rameswara". Sometimes the name "Vajra (Diamond) Rameswara" is also applied to it. The Factory of the Mysore Cement Company is just about ten miles away. It is significant that the cement produced by this Company is marketed under the trade name "Diamond Brand".

About a mile from this temple, there is a small village viz., Theerthapura. The distance from Chikkanayakanahalli to Theerthapura is about ten miles by a road which passes through the valleys in between the hills, but by foot path, it is just about five miles. About a mile and a half

from Rameswara temple there is the sacred shrine of Sapthamathrikamba. This temple is located on a tank-bund in the midst of two hills. The tank is constructed by throwing a short, tall dam between the two small hills. The length of the dam is just about 200 yards and its height about 40 feet. During rainy seasons, the tank impounds water to a depth of 25 to 30 feet. As the lake is surrounded on all three sides by hills covered with green vegetation, and, as on the fourth side, there is an open valley bringing rain water into the tank, on either side of which there are lofty ever green trees, the tank presents a lovely picture of nature's beauty in all its virgin green, the lake itself forming the centre. On a small hill adjoining the tank bund and almost forming part of it, is the temple of Sri Sapthamatrikamba. The temple building itself is very small, and faces the tank. In the santum sanctorum are installed seven small and lovely images representing the seven aspects of the Holy Mother, viz., Brahmi, Maheswari, Kowmari, Vaishnavi, Bhairavi, Indrani and Chamundi. Below the bund at the rear is a small Mantap surrounded by walls on all sides. In this mantap is installed the image of Sri Basava, carved out of black stone. From the mouth of this Basava, a continuous stream of water keeps dropping. Evidently this water flows through the body of the image through a hole bored right from the tail to the mouth. As no moisture or seepage is visible behind the mantap, it can be presumed that stone slabs have been laid below the surface to prevent the seepage showing up. A small stone-and-mortar cistern has been constructed on the spot where the water falls from the Basava's mouth. At the centre of this cistern, right at the

spot where the water drops, there is an Iswara Linga installed on a pedestal (Pani Mettalu). The water dropping from the Basava's mouth keeps bathing the Linga, like a continuous stream of oil. About the foot of water remains in this cistern always, and the surplus flows out in to the valley. At a little distance from the Sapthamathrikamba temple and the Basava Mantap is the place where the Pallegar's township appears to have existed in olden days. The fort round the town does not appear to have been a big one. The town is now in ruins and the fort wholly dilapidated. Scrub jungle has grown up all over. This is a brief description of the place where the sacred temples of Sri Theertha Rameswara and Sri Sapthamathrikamba are situated. In the month of Bhadrapada (corresponding more or less to the month of September) 1918, Shri SubbarayaSharma had to go to Yedathore, from Bangalore. After finishing his work at Yedathore, he decided to visit on his return journey, Sri Ramananda Swamy, who was then camping at the Theertha Rameswara Temple. Accordingly, he travelled from Yedathore via. Arasikere and reached Theertha Rameswara Temple on the morning of the second of the first fortnight of Asweeja Shuddha. As this happened to be the Navarathri season, Shri Ramananda Swamy himself was performing the poojas. Necessary flowers and other requirements for the pooja were being provided by Shanbhogh Nanjundaiah of Theerthapura village, which, as already stated, is about a mile from temple. As there was no village close by, all the devotees who came to the temple had to sleep in the temple premises themselves. Shri Subbaraya Sharma also did so.

Shri Subbaraya Sharma continued to stay in the temple with Shri Ramananda Swamy from the second to the sixth day of the first half of the month of Asveea. On the night of the 5th day at about one o' clock, when all the devotees were asleep, Shri Subbaraya Sharma dreamt a wonderful dream. He saw a trancendentally beautiful young female figure sitting by his side, and gently whispering "My Child, you are mine. In some remote life in the past you were the Pallegar of this place". Over-powered by the resplendent beauty of the figure and at the same time, humbled by devotion Subbaraya Sharma prostrated and queried "Is this true my Mother" and the figure replied "Of course". When she said this, Shri Subbaraya Sharma felt Supreme joy, but at the same time he also felt deeply sad that in the midst of this forest, the temple of these sacred dieties were without regular worship and that he was himself too poor to arrange for anything. Sensing this, the Holy Mother, for the apparition was none other, said "Don't grieve for me" and then disappeared. Subbaraya Sharma suddenly woke up, and informed Shri Ramananda Swamy about this. Surprisingly Shri Ramananda Swamy received the news more quietly than should have been expected in such circumstances and said "Yes, your third daughter, Mahalakshmi has appeared to me in my dreams on two days; moreover on five or six occasions during the worship of the Holy Mother, I used to see the image of this very daughter in the deity. I have written to Shri Ramaswamy, your brother-in-law, about this, and now you have had this dream! Who can say what is hidden in our past lives?". On the 7th day of the the "Navarathri" season, which is called "Kalarathri"

i.e., the Dark Night, arrangements were being made by Shri Ramananda Swamy to decorate the Holy Mother's image so as to make it look terrifying. An Agnikunda (Receptacle for the sacred fire) was also being dug in front of the image. On the 6th day, Shri Subbraya Sharma left Theertha Rameswara and reached Bangalore on the morning of the 7th day.

On the evening of that day i.e., 7th day of the first half of Asveeja, 1918, two of Shri Subbaraya Sharma's children felt slightly feverish. That very night the Holy Mother appeared to him in a dream in a terrific form and said "For reasons I do not wish to explain, I am obliged to take this terrific form to-day" and disappeared. Subbaraya Sharma was struck with terror at that cruel form, and woke up in dismay. On the evening of the 8th day his 14 year old daughter and six year old son got fever. That evening at about 7o' clock, Subbaraya Sharma's neighbour the then Senior Surgeon Dr. Armugam Mudaliar, examined both the children and treated them. At 8o' clock that very night the girl started shouting "Why are you making me lie in the temple? Take me home". The boy also felt extremely uneasy, and passed away at 10o' clock that very night. The corpse of this boy was kept in a separate room under the care of Shri Subbaraya Sharma's mother.

The daughter never gave up repeating the words "Why have you laid me in the temple? Take me home, take me home", and her agony was increasing. Subbaraya Sharma and his wife were sitting at the child's bed side and attending to its needs and trying to comfort it. The child continued to suffer like this until about 11-45 that night, and

stopped talking thereafter. Fifteen minutes later, it may be repeated here that it was 8th day sacred to Goddess Durga when Subbaraya Sharma and his wife were watching by the child's bedside, his wife felt a strange uneasiness and laid her head on Subbaraya Sharma's lap and fainted. Subbaraya Sharma also felt a vague sense of pain and sorrow and his mind became muddled. He felt, he saw his daughter wearing a yellow sari and having a vertical red mark on her forehead, prostrating before the image of Holy Mother Durga, and saw also the Archak of the Goddess coming and cutting off her head, and offering it to the Holy Mother. His mind was dazed and his sense was blurred. After a little while this image passed, and he regained his consciousness. His wife, however, continued to be in a swoon and recovered a little later. When they were wondering what this signified the child breathed her last.

The bereaved mother sat weeping by the side of the corpse. Tired and dazed, Subbaraya Sharma laid his head on the pillow nearby, and was weeping. Gradually his senses got benumbed, and he entered a state of slumber. At this movement, a past Swamy of Sringeri Mutt, Sri Sachidananda Narasimha Bharathi, appeared before him and told him "Grieve not. The sin you are now expiating is the remnant of your evil doings in a past life. In remote life, you were Pallegar (Chieftain) of Hagalwadi, close to Chikkanayakanahalli. The Saptamathrika and Theertha Ramerwara Temples, and the Chieftaincy round about belonged to your domain. Though you were a pious and devout ruler, you unfortunately developed the

association of a Tantric Guru. Lured by this and aching, you constructed a temple devoted to Shri Durga and had Her image consecrated by that Guru. With the desire to gain her favour, you started offering human sacrifice.

Know that I, who am talking to you, am no other than Sri Vidyaranya, who established the Vijayanagar Kingdom. The Chieftaincy of Hagalwadi was then part of the Vijayanagar Empire. As you were pious and devoted by nature, I wanted to wean you from the association of that Tantric Guru, and from the cruel practices like Tantric Worship, human sacrifice, etc., and so sent for you and advised you. You were convinced that the offering of such sacrifices was absolutely wrong, and taking my advice, you demolished the temple of Shri Durga Devi, and constructed the present temple in its place. I myself appeared then and officiated as the Purohit, and in the temple you had constructed, installed the image of Shri Rameswara, who combines in himself the twin Gods of Shiva and Vishnu, and I also installed the Linga as well as the image of the Holy Mother Balarajeswari. The images of the other Gods viz., Sri Ganapathi, the Sun God and Narayana were also installed and I ordained that you should worship and serve them in sathvic fashion. I left with you one of my pupils to teach you the knowledge of Atman. That pupil, who in a past life had taught you the knowledge of Atman, is none other than Shri Sambasadashivananda Swamy who was formerly at Sringeri, and who now stays in Nanjangud. Also understand that Sri Ramananda who is now performing worship according to Shakteya rites is none other than same Tantric Guru with whom you

were associated in that remote life. Even then, you felt sorrow, for the sin of offering human sacrifice. Know this, that just as an arrow, once discharged from the bow, will not return without performing its destructive errand, so also every one must suffer for his sins though he may later repent. But I gave you the blessings that when your earthly experiences should come to an end, you should recollect all these past sins, and atone for and so be purified of them. So, understand that the very girl whom you had offered as a sacrifice in past life was born as your daughter and died early to make you atone in this life for that sin. That is the reason why she was repeatedly uttering the words "Why have you laid me in the temple? Take me home, take me home, and died with those words on her lips. And I have now come to tell you about preexistence and future lives. Don't grieve for those that are dead. Just understand that this mere atonement of past sins. The Holy Mother will give these children of yours that are now no more, a better life, Bear your grief with fortitude". After this, Subbaraya Sharma woke up and became aware of the world outside.

After waking up from that trance, which was neither a state of sleep, nor of dream, nor of wakefulness, Subbaraya Sharma felt extremely sad and was amazed; on one side he had deep unbearable sorrow, and on the other a sense of a wonder of wonders. He did not know which was real. After completing the obsequies of the two dead children, Subbaraya Sharma explained all that happened to his wife and his brother-in-law Sri Ramaswamy, and Shri Sambasadasiyananda in Nanjangud. He came to know

that, about the same time, Shri Ramananda Swamy, who was following Shakti ways of worship, was arranging to decorate the Holy Mother in an extremely cruel form on the night of the 7th day of the Navarathri festivals, and was trying to gain her favour by special mantras known by the name "Krishna Kali Mantra". At this, Subbaraya Sharma wrote a long letter to Shri Ramananda Swamy, explaining all the experiences that he had undergone, and requesting him to abandon the idea of decorating the Holy Mother in a terrific form, and asking him to abjure from all forms of tantric worship in that holy place. But it brought no response.

Three months after the happening of the incidents cited above, Subbaraya Sharma felt a strong desire to go again to Theertha Rameswara. In fulfilment of this desire, he went there in the company of his mother, wife and the remaining four children. As he had already written about this to Shri Sambasadasidashivananda, Shri Sambasadasidashivananda also arrived at Theertha Rameswara from Nanjangud. All of them stayed there for 7 days, offering worship to God and performing Bhajans in the name of Shri Rama and Shri Shankara. While this was going on, another incident occurred, affording further proof of the doctrine of pre-existence. One night as Shri Subbaraya Sharma's wife was sleeping, she dreamed that a Divine Lady of resplendent beauty appeared to her and said "The place of one of your earlier lives was the chieftaincy of Saptha Mathrika. Your father was then the Pallegar of that Chieftaincy. In that past life also, you were wife of the same person as in this life. He was then the Pallegar of

the neighbouring Chieftaincy of Hagalwadi. As your father had no son, the Chieftaincy of Saptha Mathrikamba also passed on to your husband. You see that even in this life your father, Seetharamaiah has no sons. He has only seven daughters. All the seven daughters are born with the blessings of Shri Saptha Matrikamba. As you are all born with her blessings, and as the Saptha Matrikamba image was consecrated by no less a person than Shri Vidyaranya himself, this is specially sacred place for you, do carry on the worship of the Saptha Matrika devi, you will attain bliss". Subbaraya Sarma's wife immediately told her husband of this dream. There upon, the entire family visited Saptha Mathrikamba temple and performed poojas and made holy offerings to the benign Goddess. The family then returned to Bangalore.

Two months after their return, another daughter of Sri Subbaraya Sharma, who was eight years old, suddenly developed stomach ache, and died on the evening of the second day after the affliction. This calamity, coming as it did just six months after the other two obsessed Shri Subbaraya Sharma. On the one hand the Guru's message in a dream that the death of his two earlier children was the effect of the sins of his past lives, had greatly amazed him, and he had begun to wonder whether this might be the work of some evil spirit, and on the other he had this latest calamity of the sudden death of a third child. He wondered whether it was the hand of destiny that had taken him to Theertha Rameswara a second time, and whether it was the same destiny that was behind the peculiar happenings there. As he sat contemplating on these sad

events, at 3o' clock in the small hours of the morning, the Guru appeared to him in a dream again in the same form as before, and said "You have still not tried to understand the Shastras. Know that nothing happens without cause. Do realise that it is by the favour of Goddess Durga Devi, whom you were worshipping in a past life with sacrifices of all sorts, that this female child was born as yours in this life, and it is by the same benign favour that you have accomplished what you have so far done. Your recent visit to Theertha Rameswara and the Saptha Matrikamba Temples, where you have performed poojas for seven days with your family is the result of the piety with which you had the old Durgamba temple removed and a new one constructed in its place and also had the images of Shri Rameswara Swamy in the form of a Linga, accompanied by his consort Shri Balarajeswari installed. Indeed I had prayed to Shankara Mahadev, even at the time you installed the Rameswara idol in the form of a Linga, that God himself may reside in that idol and bless you in course of time. I had remained and offered regular worship myself to the God for a period of 45 days (i.e., one mandala) after installation. Have faith in Shri Shankara Mahadev, Shri Rameswara and the Devi, you will attain bliss in due course ! It is the image of the very child that is now no more, that was appearing before Shri Ramananda during his worship of the Devi. The Shaktyea Guru who was associated with you when you were a Pallegar in a remote life, nursed a deep hatred towards me for persuading you to remove the Durga Devi image to which human sacrifices were being offered, and to instal Rameswara Swami image with that of Shri Rajeswari in its place. Still, I advised

him against Tantric forms of worship and the invoking of evil spirits, and warned him that this would never bring bliss". Having said this the Guru disappeared.

As Subbaraya Sharma has not studied the scriptures and attained that peace of mind which comes from spiritual knowledge, the strange death of his three children was still troubling him. Curious to find out the truth behind the peculiar circumstances of the death of these children, he was seeking enlightenment from every one for whom he had some respect. He knew, of course, that all creatures had to die sometime or other, but wondered why such surprising things should have happened when his own children died. Moreover, the circumstances, of their passing away and the peculiar events revealed in his own and others' dreams about past existence and happenings, found corroboration, not only in the events of its own life, but in those of several others. He was therefore anxious to find out the truth behind all this apparently strange phenomena. Some friends attributed all these happenings to the doings of evil spirits. Others said that this was nothing but the result of his own actions in previous lives. Still as the mystery had not been resolved, he desided to proceed to Sringeri and lay all the facts at the feet of His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swami and seek enlightenment from him. He accordingly went to Sringeri to seek His Holiness's blessings. At the same time Shri Sambadasivananda Swami had also arrived at Sringeri from Nanjangud. His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swamy patiently heard him and said : "This could not have happened except on account of the

inter-relationship of past and present lives. Do have faith in this, and cultivate devotion to the Holy Mother and reverence for Gurus'. At this point Shri Subbaraya Sharma submitted to the Swamiji his desire to join the Monastic order, abandoning all family connections (i.e., becoming a Sanyasi, giving up Gruhasthashram). On learning this, His Holiness advised him strongly to abandon the idea of joining the Monastic Order, and to continue in Gruhasthashram. By following this Course, His Holiness said, he would receive the blessings of Shri Sharadamba and attain spiritual eminence in due course. He also blessed Shri Sambasadashivananda Swami in suitable manner. After receiving His Holiness's blessings, Shri Subbaraya Sharma returned to Bangalore, with faith in God and calm of mind restored. After returning from Sringeri, Shri Subbaraya Sharma re-joined the old Government appointment. In the beginning of the year 1921, both he and Shri Sambasadashivanda Swamy had dreams cautioning them that Shri Ramananda at Rameswara Temple was making arrangements again to decorate the Devi's image in a cruel form and worshipping her with tantric litany and urging them to prevent this. Both of them decided that the best course to adopt to achieve this object would be for them to proceed immediately to Theertha Rameswara. So they immediately went there. On arrival there they saw that the image of the Goddess was being decorated in an abhorrent form, and that a sword had also been placed in her hand. A huge pit was being dug in front of the image to receive the sacrificial fire. Ramananda Swamy was not performing poojas during day time. He was performing special poojas and rituals only during

nights. A gentleman named Seshu Iyer from Chandrasekharapura, and his wife were staying in the temple for about a month to assist him. The Shanbhog of Theerthapura Shri Nanjundaiah was providing the necessary equipment for the poojas. His nine year old (un-married) daughter was visiting the temple frequently with her father for about a year. The jewels and ornaments of this girl were being sent to the temple for decorating the diety.

Shri Ramananda Swamy did not relish the arrival of Shri Subbaraya Sharma and Sambasadashivananda Swamy. On the very night on which Sri Subbaraya Sharma reached Theertha Rameswara temple, Shri Vidyaranya appeared to him in a dream and told him "This Ramananda Swamy has a vicious desire to trace the wealth hidden in the fort of the Saptha Matrikamba Chieftaincy and the Theertha Rameswara Temple by the Pallegars of olden days. With this desire he is adopting evil ways of acquiring supernatural powers by Shaktya forms of worship of the Devi. Instead of openly offering human sacrifice, he is seeking to achieve the same object by securing the immolation of a young female after ensnaring her by the arts of hypnotism, enticement and overpowering (Sammohana, Akarshana and Marana ways). As after death, such sacrificed persons are believed to become spirits, he seeks to attain his wishes through the spirit of this girl. Though Ramananda is born a Brahmin, he is not able to rise above devlish desires. The young daughter of Shantin Nanjundaiah and the wife of Seshu Iyer's brother are already in the grip of his hypnotic powers. "Take courage, and warn Ramananda that he should not worship the Goddess in

this cruel and abhorrent manner, and prevent him from doing so. Have no fear ! He may be displeased with you, but whatever revenge he may seek to take, he cannot really harm you. You are protected by my blessings and the grace of the Goddess". After saying this Swamy Vidyaranya disappeared.

Immediately after this, Shri Subbaraya Sharma recounted what had happened to Shri Sambasadashivananda. Upon this, both of them took Seshu Iyer with them and proceeded to Shanbhog Nanjundaiah's house in Theerthapura. They explained to Shri Nanjundiah their experiences during their previous visit to Theertha Rameswara during the Navarathri of 1918, and how on the Durgastami day of that year, two of Subbaraya Sharma's children had passed away in a mysterious manner, and how six months later, another girl also had died. They explained to him also the purpose of their present visit to the place, and how Shri Vidyaranya Swamy himself had appeared in a dream and advised Subbaraya Sharma as to what had to be done. After hearing all this, both Seshu Iyer and Nanjundiah, who had till then reposed implicit faith in Swamy Ramananda, began to entertain doubts. Shri Nanjundiah also recounted how, on the night of the same Durgasthami day, he had a dream that Shri Ramananda had offered in sacrifice to the Goddess a girl and a he-buffalo: and that he had told Ramananda about this. He added that, for the past one month or so, his daughter had developed a kind of torpor and that he had sought in vain Ramananda's advice as to how to get her cured. After further consultations, Shri Subbaraya Sharma, Shri Sambasadashivananda, and Shri Seshu Iyer returned to the temple.

Early next morning, Shri Subbaraya Sharma finished his ablutions and went to the temple of Shri Theertha-rameswara Swamy.

He immediately met Shri Ramananda Swamy and frankly told him "I had already written requesting you not to decorate the image of the Goddess in a cruel form ; in spite of it, you have put such terryfying decorations on her ; Please remove them. I came here specifically to advise you to remove them". Ramanananda replied "Why, this won't harm you at all. I have still to perform these poojas for some more days", in answer to which, Shri Subbaraya Sharma told him that he might perform those poojas anywhere else except at that temple. Ramananda Swamy did not agree, and hot words were exchanged between them. At last Shri Subbaraya Sharma said that he would himself enter the Sanctum Santorum and remove the decorations, if Ramananda did not do so. Shri Ramananda grew angry at this and shouted "If you enter the Sanctum Sanctorum, and touch the image of the Goddess, you will have to suffer the consequences!" Unperturbed by this threat, Shri Subbaraya Sharma offered mental prayers to Shri Vidyaranya Swamy and the Holy Goddess, and having the lovely picture of God Gopalakrishna in his mind, instantly entered the Sanctum Sanctorum and removed the decorations and the sword that had been placed in the hands of the Goddess and came out. Shri Nanjundiah of Theerthapura and others who were present were alarmed, lest Shri Subbaraya Sharma should kill Ramananda with the sword; they therefore took away the sword from Subbaraya Sharma's hands and hid it in

some crevice behind the temple. Shri Sambasadashivannanda and Shri Seshu Iyer were at this time trying to pacif Ramananda Swamy. Subbaraya Sharma not only removed with singular courage, the terrific decorations that had been put on the image of the Goddess, but also poured water on the sacrificial fire and extinguished it.

As had been arranged in advance, immediately after completing their work at the temple, Shri Subbaraya Sharma, Shri Nanjundiah and Shri Sambasadashivannanda returned to Theerthapura village. Shri eshu Iyer, his brother and their wives also left the temple telling Shri Ramananda that they would be returning to their respective villages. That very day Shanubhog Nanjundiah went with the Patel of the village and three or four leading persons of the locality to Chiikkanayakana-halli, and met the Amildar and the Police Inspector and the Sub-Division Officer, and explained to them all that had happened. They requested the officers to see that Ramananda was removed from the place. The Sub-Division officer at the time, Shri S. Narayana Rao, knew Shri Subbaraya Sharma well. Immediately he heard all that had happened, he issued directions to the Police Inspector to bring Ramananda from Theertha Rameswara temple to Chikkanayakanahalli. The Police Inspector went to the temple with a suitable Police force, and brought Ramananda with all his kit to Chikkanayakanahalli. The Sub-Division Officer and the Police Inspector told the Swamy that the people of the area did not like his unholy activities, and asked him to quit the boundaries of the Taluk immediately, and saw to it that he did so.

The very next day after his departure, Shri Sambasadashivananda and Subbaraya Sharma went to Theertha Rameswara temple and thoroughly washed it inside and out, and also cleaned the Linga, the images of Ganapathi, the Sun God, Narayana and the other deities and started worship. Fortunately a herd of Amrith Mahal cattle happened to be tethered nearby. Drawing the milk of the cows in potfulls, Subbaraya Sharma and Sambasadashivananda Swamiji bathed the images in pure cows milk, chanting satwic mantras from the Vedas all the time. They performed these sacred poojas for five days and then returned to Bangalore. All the five days when the poojas were going on, Shanbhog Shri Nanjundiah of Theerthapura assisted Shri Subbaraya Sharma. As Theertha Rameswara temple is situated in valley, and in the midst of forests, regular daily worship is not being performed in it even to-day. Such devotees as go there perform their own poojas and receive the blessings of the Goddess.

Some strange event that followed may be of interest in this connection. The daughter of Shanbhogh Nanjundiah suddenly became hysterical, and inspite of the best treatment that could be given, was not cured. She lived for 20 years in this state of hysteria bordering on insanity, and passed away. Shri Nanjunadiah had been assisting Shri Ramananda Swamy for two successive years. His life-long regret was that this association was responsible for his daughter losing her senses, and eventually meeting a premature death. This girl was none other than the sister of the learned Dr. T.N. Srikantiah, who was Professor of Kannada in the Mysore University, and whose name

is still well-known in academic and literary circles. The brother of Seshu Iyer and his wife (that is the brother's wife) both lost their senses also, and after a few years, passed away. This again was on account of their close association with the Swami in his unwholesome practices.

The Sub Divisional Officer, Shri S. NarayanaRao, who took such decisive action against Ramananda Swamy, prospered in official career, and in due course attained the exalted position of Revenue Commissioner of the State. He has now retired from service and is enjoying a peaceful retired life devoted to prayers and poojas, and is living in Bangalore. Whenever he meets Subbaraya Sharma, which he occasionally does, he recalls the past events recorded here. Though Subbaraya Sharma nurtured no hatred towards Ramananda, Ramananda developed intense hatred and tried to harm Subbaraya Sharma with various Tantric rituals like "Shunya" and other rites. But, thanks to the blessings of the sages and the Gurus and the Grace of Shri Sharada Devi, Subbaraya Sharma remains unhurt. This shows how when one associates himself with wicked people and follows vicious ways, it will be difficult for him to extricate himself from such associations and to return to the righteous path. Likewise, if in the worship of God, one devotes himself to unwholesome Tantric ways and seeks the influence of evil spirits, it will be difficult for him to give up such practices unless of course the blessings of a Saintly Guru, like Vidyaranya, are on the side of the person as they happily were in Shri Subbaraya Sharma's case, when, in a past life, he was the Pallegar of Hagalwadi. Subbaraya Sharma recollects with grateful tears the

benign grace of the Gurus and blessings of the Holy Mother which had saved him from evil ways.

## PART - II

After successfully securing the removal of Shri Ramananda from the Theertha Rameswara Temple in the year 1921, Shri Subbaraya Sharma returned to Bangalore, and re-joined his Government appointment. While continuing to attend to his official duties, he never gave up the daily worship and other rituals ordained in the Shastras. He also organised a Rama Bhajana Sabha with the assistance of a friend named Compounder Subba Rao, in the premises of his house in Malleshwaram and was having Bhajans and prayer meetings every Saturday. This Sabha was also organising periodical religious meetings, and Harikathas. It was also celebrating the Ramotsava festival every year. As Shri Subbaraya Sharma was deeply interested in meditative yoga practices, he got himself initiated into such practices, by Shri Sambasadashivananda Swamy and started practising the four or five important postures of the yoga system, particularly pranayama (breath control) and meditation. At the same time, he used to visit Theertha Rameswara and Sringeri at least twice every year to receive blessings of the Gods and Gurus in those places.

Five or six years passed this way. While arranging for the worship of Shri Rama through Rama Bhajana Sabha, a strange idea occurred to Shri Subbaraya Sharma. He thought within himself as follows. Shri Rama, the Supreme God, is also known as the Paramathma - the

cosmic soul which pervades the Universe, and at the same time resides in each sentient being. The essence of Vedantha is to realise the God within us ; and Hanumantha the devotee of Rama is none other than Vayu -- the air that sustains life. In our own bodies this life giving "Vayu" manifestes itself in the form of inhalation and exhalation. All this, he thought, must possess some hidden meaning, and was inspired by a strong desire to explore this phenomenon and discover the hidden principle. While these thoughts were revolving in his mind, a strange incident happened in the year 1927.

At about one o' clock on the night of the 3rd day of the first fortnight of the month of Chaithra of the year, 1927, corresponding to the year "Prabhava" in the Indian Calendar, Shri Subbaraya Sharma woke up after a mystic experience. He was then in a state of trance, which was neither wakefulness, nor sleep, nor a state of dreaming. In this state he saw standing before him a lovely female form of transcendent beauty and grace. This figure smiled and asked him "Have you understood the hidden meaning of the "Ramayana ?" Shri Subbaraya Sharma was filled with joy and devotion at the sight of this resplendent figure, and humbly asked - "Who are you Oh' Mother ! ". The figure replied "My dear child, understand that I am none other than the very God who inspired Guru Vidyaranya to bless you when you were Pallegar of Theertha Rameswara in a remote life, and to advise you to instal the Linga of Shri Rameshwara, thus illustrating the common divinity appearing in the twin forms of Shiva and Vishnu. The same guru himself installed my image

also in strict Yogic posture, and gave it the name of Balarajeswari, and prayed that I may bestow my grace on you. Now that you have reached the right time, after going through the required cycle of lives, I have come to give you my Darshan in this life. There are few who can instal my image in the shudda yoga posture. I am responsible for inspiring in you the desire to know the inner significance of Shri Rama's story. Though you are not learned, do not worry. Since you have the rare advantage of divine intiation, if only you start writing its hidden meaning, the significance of the story of Shri Rama will be revealing itself to your mind's eye of its own accord."

When the Holy Mother was saying this, Subbaraya Sharma's mind was lifted above worldly matters, and he was wondering at the numerous entanglements he had still to overcome, before his mind could become free. The Holy Mother understood this, and told him : "Don't grieve. The bud is still not the flower; it takes time for it to blossom forth into a flower and for the fruit to ripen thereafter. This is my own rule, and I cannot alter it myself. Everything must happen according to the ordained order of time and sequence. Six hundred and fifty years have now passed. Know you that Narasimha Bharathi Swami is the present Avatar of Vidyaranya. Vidyaranya had immense devotion towards Shankaracharya, the master of Masters. He had a burning desire to find out the birth place of Shankaracharya, and to install an image of his there and to construct a suitable temple for Goddess Sharada at Sringeri. He has, therefore, been re-born in this life as Narasimha Bharathi Swamy to have these desires fulfilled.

Just think how many years have rolled by in Time's endless Cycle. Even in this perpetual Cycle, nothing happens unless propitious combinations of circumstances occur. Your Chieftaincy then was auxiliary to the Vijayanagar Empire. The very founders of Vijayanagar are now re-born as His Highness Krishnaraja Wodeyar of Mysore and his brother Narasimharaja Wodeyar. Events must happen in accordance with the cosmic order, and not otherwise. After Vidyaranya Swamy bless you in that remote life you have completed 26 re-births ; on account of the sin you committed in offering human sacrifices in that past life, you had to be born again and again taking in succession the lives of fowl, sheep and other low creatures. In some of these past lives, you did attempt to achieve good, and that has reformed you. Hereafter you need not bother about any further births". When she was saying this, Subbaraya Sharma felt an earnest desire to see again the very Guru who had blessed him in the past life. Immediately, he had a vision of that very Guru right at the feet of the Holy Mother. This Guru then opened his lips and said :—The Holy Mother has fulfilled my prayers. When she has taken everything on herself, what is there for me to say or do ? Since there is no difference between Shri Rama and Shri Shankara, I have installed a common Linga embodying the unity of both forms. Cultivate deep faith in the Holy Mother, and in God Rameswara. Write a book on the inner meaning of the Ramayana in accordance with the Holy Mother's commands ; you will attain fame and bliss."

At this, Shri Subbaraya Sharma woke up and was amazed- He was both happy and sad at the recollection

of all that had happened. After finishing his ablutions, he went to the idol of Shri Rajeswari and placing his head at the feet of the Goddess, prayed for her grace and protection, remaining in that posture for hours.

The next day he explained all that had happened to Shri Sambasadashivananda Swamy. As he was anxious to see His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swami, of Sringeri Mutt, who was then camping at Kalati, the birth place of Shankaracharya, both he and Sri Sambasadashivananda proceeded to that place and saw His Holiness. Though Subbaraya Sharma was anxious to relate to His Holiness all that had happened, Shri Sambasadashivananda Swamy advised him not to do so, suggesting that the proper course for him would be first to write the book on the inner meaning of the Ramayana as directed by the Mother and then to explain to His Holiness all that had happened.

After returning from Kalati, Shri Subbaraya Sharma felt that before commencing to write the projected book, he should first go to the Theertha Rameswara Temple and Sapthamatrikamba temples again and offer worship. Accordingly, he went to Teertha Rameswara and stayed there for two days and offered devout worship to Balarajeswari and Shri Rameswara Swamy, and with the blessings of the Gods and the Holy Mother, commenced writing the book in that sacred place. Having made a start, he returned to Bangalore to complete the work. As he used to be engaged with Government work during day time, he took to writing the book from 8 o' clock in the night every day, right upto 2 or 3 a.m. next morning,

having a picture of Sharadamba constantly in front of him. The moment he started writing the profound significance of the various events in the sacred story of Shri Rama would flash before his Mind's eye. The corroborating passages of the Upanishads and other sacred books also would flash to his mind, and the writing would go on uninterruptedly, as if a Divine Mind and hand were guiding him. The entire story from beginning to end occupied 1,400 pages. It took two years and a half to complete the work. The manuscript was then handed over to Sri Sambasadashivananda Swamy and to Shri Narayana Sastri, Principal of the Sanksrit Pathashala at Nanjangud, for scrutiny.

Anxious to submit the manuscript for the perusal of His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swamy of Shringeri, Subbaraya Sharma went in July, 1930 to Sringeri and placed his wish before His Holiness. As numerous devotees used to be seeking interviews with him every day, His Holiness could not spare time to peruse the 1,400 pages of the manuscript. He, therefore, entrusted the work of reading the manuscript to Ved : Sundara Shastrigal, Principal of the Sanskrit Pathashala and Ved : Narasimha Sahstrigal, retired Principal of the same Pathashala. Both these Pandits, either themselves read, or heard Shri Subbaraya Sharma read, the manuscript every day, and at the end of the day used to submit an account of what they had read or heard to His Holiness. Thus they read the book from start to finish. His Holiness, after hearing from these two scholars the abstruse philosophy embodied in the book, and having heard also about the unique cir-

cumstances which led to its writing, asked Subbaraya Sharma himself to read some of the portions. After hearing these portions, His Holiness felt immensely satisfied and invoked the blessings of Shri Saradamba on Shri Subbaraya Sharma and his book, and advised Shri Subbaraya Sharma to publish the book for the benefit of all devout persons.

Before leaving Sringeri, Shri Subbaraya Sharma prostrated before His Holiness and sought his blessings. His Holiness assured him that the grace of benign Devi was on him, but warned him, at the same time, not to tarnish his spiritual powers by teaching Tantric practices or modes of worship to any one, and to remain pure in mind. He also advised him to reveal what he had realised only to such persons as came and sought the knowledge, and cautioned him that he should never deliver any public lectures about what he had seen and realised, nor speak about them to all and sundry.

Returning to Bangalore with His Holiness's blessings Shri Subbaraya Sharma undertook the task (not an easy one for a person of his slender means) of getting the book printed and distributed among those who were interested in spiritual matters.

There are 24,000 stanzas (slokas) in the sacred book Ramayana. These 24,000 stanzas correspond to the 24 initial letters of the "Gayathri Mantra" - Subbaraya Sharma has explained in his book how the inner meaning of

the Ramayana corresponds to the meaning of the Gayatri Manthra. Shri Subbaraya Sharma and Shri Sambasadashivananda have made an extensive search to ascertain whether there is any book in any Indian language, including Sanskrit, expounding the inner meaning of the Ramayana, and have found none. Sri Subbaraya Sharma's book is therefore the very first of its kind in India. Though the book was written by the Holy Mother's inspiration, Shri Subbaraya Sharma was anxious to ascertain the opinions of learned scholars about it. A list of scholars who have expressed their opinions on this book is printed at the end of this book. A perusal of this list indicates what a rare work it is.

It has been recorded in the earlier pages of this book that Subbaraya Sharma was frequently going and offering worship at the Theertha Rameswara and Sapthamatrikamba temple near Chikkanayakanahalli. On one such visit in the month of March, 1934, he felt like staying over for 4-5 days in the temple of Sapthamatrikamba itself, and offering worship there. The Amildar of Chikkanayakanahalli at the time was one Shri B. Suryanarayana Rao. Shri Subbaraya Sharma had known this gentleman some years before, when he was employed in the Government Secretariat at Bangalore. He too was pious in temperament. When Sri Subbaraya Sharma expressed his wish to Shri Suryanarayana Rao, he welcomed the idea, and even offered to stay at the temple with Subbaraya Sharma. But the people of the area tried to dissuade them from carrying out this plan, as the Sapthamathrikamba temple was in the midst of a hilly forest infested with tigers and cheetas and it was therefore dangerous for any one to stay

thereafter nightfall. They said the temple itself was too small to afford shelter ; what was even more forbidding was, the fear that the sanctity of the place might be lost by sleeping etc., during nights, which no body could dare venture to do in the presence of the mighty divine power Sapthamathrikamba. For these reasons, so far as their memory went, no body had stayed in the temple before.

Even Subbaraya Sharma himself when he had offered worship in this temple before, had done so only during the day time, and used to return to the Theertha Rameswara Temple for the night. Despite all this Sri Subbaraya Sharma was determined to carry out his wish and Shri Suryanarayana Rao who had heard in detail of Subbaraya Sharma's experiences, agreed to stay with him in the Sapthamathrikamba temple for 3 to 4 days. Accordingly, they went to the temple.

The peculiar location of the Sapthamatrikumba temple has already been described. Shri Subbaraya Sharma used to have his bath every morning and evening and to worship the Seven dieties viz,, Brahmi, Maheswari, Kowmari, Vaishnavi, Varahi, Indrani and Chamunda performing Abhisheka (bathing), Archana (offering of flowers and kunkum) and to sit for hours in meditation at the sacred feet of the Holy Mother. Shanbhog Nanjundaiah of Theerthapura and Amildar Suryanarayana Rao used to remain outside the Sanctum Sanctorum and to watch the poojas. Shri Subbaraya Sharma lived on mere milk all these 4 days. Shri Suryanarayana Rao and Sri Nanjundiah used to have only one meal a day. During the whole night Subbaraya Sharma used to sit in meditation by the side of the goddess. The fears expressed by the people

were no doubt well-founded, for, when Subbaraya Sharma and Suryanarayana Rao came out of the temple in the small hours one morning, they saw closeby a tiger feasting on a deer, which it had just then killed. But they themselves came to no harm, thanks to the Holy Mother's protective mantle.

Subbaraya Sharma used to spend most of his time, both mornings and evenings, in meditation. When he was in meditation on the second day, he had a resplendent vision of Shri Sharadamba with the Veena in one hand and sacred books in the other, which vision flashed for a moment and disappeared. This vision filled him with blissful joy, and it occurred to him that the vision was none other than the heavenly spirit of Shri Brahmi which combines the sacred powers of Sharadamba and Sapthamatrikamba, and in a flash, he also realised the profound significance of the Veena and the books in her hands. The books signified the limitless wealth of knowledge and philosophy that underlies the creation, existence and ultimate destruction of the Universe, and the knowledge of the past, present and the hereafter. The Veena (Stringed Musical instrument) in the hands of the vision, signified the creation of the Universe from utter void and silence, beginning with the sacred sound "OM". Thus he realised that the Goddess Sharada was the very embodiment of cosmic knowledge and the rythm of the Universe.

After staying at the Sapthamatrikamba temple for four days and offering worship, in which Shri B. Suryanarayana Rao participated, Shri Subbaraya Sharma returned to Bangalore. Intent on carrying out Shri Sharada

Devi's command, he commenced writing a book on the significance of the Veena and completed it in a few days. He included in this book an essay on the profundity and importance of the "Sandhyavandana" which manifests the greatness of "Gayathri" Devi. The Book was published in 1936. All scholars who perused this book were immensely pleased. In point of fact, this is the very first attempt in the country, and perhaps the only one, which deals with the significance of the Veena, which is always borne in the hands of Shri Sharada Devi. A perusal of this book and the opinions expressed by scholars will convey an idea of its uniqueness. Shri Suryanarayana Rao who stayed with Shri Subbaraya Sharma at the Sapthamatrikamba temple at the time, has since retired from service, and is even now staying in one of the extensions of Bangalore.

The book on the inner significance of the Ramayana was published in 1931. Many persons, though un-learned in the literary sense, but actuated by a genuine desire to know the inner meaning of the Ramayana, used to seek daily guidance from Shri Subbaraya Sharma and to study the book with earnestness under his personal guidance and interpretation.

It may not be out of place to cite a few out of many such instances. Two Americans came to India with a burning desire for self realisation and started practising Yoga and were touring intensively in the country in quest of a Guru. After arrival in India they had their names changed to "Buddhadeesha" and "Ananda deesha". In the course of their tour, they came to Bangalore and were living in Shri B.H. Sanjeevappa's Choultry, on the Railway Station Road. Searching for a guru to intiate them on the

path of spiritual knowledge, they asked Shri Sanjeevappa whether there was any learned persons at whose feet they could learn and practice introspective yoga (Meditation). As Shri Sanjeevappa had known Shri Yadathore Subbaraya Sharma before, he not only mentioned his name to these seekers, but also showed them the book on the inner significance of the Ramayana written by Shri Subbaraya Sharma, and explained to them in English a few of its passages. They were deeply interested in the work, and wished to see its author, and learn further from him. Accordingly Shri Sanjeevappa brought and introduced them to Shri Subbaraya Sharma.

These two gentlemen had intensively read the Bhagawadgeetha and other sacred books, as well as some of the works of Swami Vivekananda. They used to visit Shri Subbaraya Sharma frequently and to discuss with him matters pertainig to the Vedantha philosophy and the attainment of self-realisation through yoga. After a preliminary visit for about a fortnight, they were so deeply interested in these subjects, and became so attracted by Shri Subbaraya Sharma's teachings that they decided to stay in Bangalore for 3 to 4 years to learn and practice Yoga under Subbaraya Sharma's guidance. But unfortunately after they had spent about a year and half, one of them, viz., Bhuddadeesha had an attack of small pox and had to be removed to the Isolation Hospital. Subbaraya Sharma visited him several times there, in the company of Shri Sanjeevappa. When the malady increased and Bhuddadeesha realised that his end was near, he expressed an earnest desire to see Shri Subbaraya Sharma. Subbaraya Sharma accordingly went and saw him.

When he saw Subbaraya Sharma, Buddadeesha respectfully folded his hands and said : "Oh, my Guru, this body will not survive anymore. Will you please carry out a dying wish of mine ? Please do not bury this body ; cremate it in the same manner as Brahmins dispose of their dead. Please bless me that, after cremation, the carnal adhesions of the soul may be extinguished and that I may become pure. If you will kindly grant me this prayer, I shall die in peace and my spirit will be rid of its dross. I hope to be born again as a pure soul in the sacred land of India". Subbaraya Sharma listened and agreed to carryout his wishes, and blessed him heartily and advised him, even at the time of death, to have abiding faith in God. The next day Buddhadeesha passed away in peace. Sri Sanjeevappa had the body removed to the cremation ground and, after erecting a funeral pyre, had it cremated in the fashion of Brahmins. Subbaraya Sharma was present at the cremation ground. He took a bath and invoked the invisible soul to remain with the body at the time of cremation, and prayed to the Fire God "Yagneswara" that he may destroy the carnal nature of the soul. The next four days, Subbaraya Sharma used to have his bath in the Malleswara tank and to offer worship and sacred water (Tilodak) to release the soul from its intermediate stage (prethathva). On the 5th day the spirit, wholly cured of its carnal nature, appeared and prostrated before Subbaraya Sharma and told him that it was taking re-birth elsewhere in India and left. Shri Sanjeevappa is even now in Bangalore.

In the year 1932, Sri Subbaraya Sharma gave some copies of his Ramayana to one Shri K. G. Ramaswamy,

who was sub-registrar in Chamarajanagar. Shri Rama-swamy had kept two copies of the book on his office table. A constable named Madiah (a Harijan by caste) who used to visit the Sub-Registrar's office in the course of his duties, saw and was attracted by the books on the table, as they appeared to him to contain some spiritual knowledge. He then asked the Sub-Registrar whether the books were for sale. The Sub-Registrar hesitated to give an affirmative answer, as he was doubtful whether such books could go to the hands of a Harijan. He immediately wrote to Shri Subbaraya Sharma seeking instructions. Shri Subbaraya Sharma replied that any person interested in it was entitled to the knowledge of the Spirit, irrespective of caste or race, and that as Shri Madiah had evinced such genuine interest, the books might be given to him. Accordingly Shri Madiah bought a copy.

Though he found it some what difficult at first to grasp the philosophy contained in the book, Shri Madiah strove hard to understand it by repeated readings. Two years later, his wife passed away. He developed a sense of other worldliness, gave up his job as a constable, and leaving his only son in charge of his brother, retired to a lonely hut away from the Harijan Colony. He gave away all his property to his brother; and used to stay alone in this hut, giving up meat eating, and taking just one meal a day consisting of rice and water and a few plantains. He spent all his day reading Subbaraya Sharma's book on the inner meaning of the Ramayana and contemplating on the spirit of Shri Rama. With the desire to see the author of the book and receive his blessings, Shri Madiah came to Bangalore in the year 1935, prostrated before Subbaraya

Sharma and said "My Master, this body is born of impure blood, and I have lived an impure life, eating all things and doing wicked acts. I realise the wrong I have done. Is there anything I can do to become pure?" Subbaraya Sharma advised him in reply not to grieve for what had happened, as he was hardly responsible for it. He advised him further to bathe in cold water, both morning and evening every day, and after taking two cups of water in the morning to perform "Pranayam" - control of breath (inhaling and exhaling after retention of the breath for a time) and advised him also to continue the same sathwic food that he was taking. He warned him to perform Pranayam only after taking water. This way, he said, the body would become clean, and the blood would be rid of its impurities, and he would in due course attain peace of mind and calmness of spirit. Madiah stayed for a couple of days and learnt the practice of Pranayama from Subbaraya Sharma and thereafter left, saying that he would go away and stay at the sacred hill temple of Shri Biligiri Rangaswamy, practising what he had learnt.

Madiah came to Bangalore in 1940 with the desire to see his Guru again. Subbaraya Sharma was surprised at the spiritual radiance his face had acquired, and the liteness of his body. He advised him again never to give up "Rechaka" and "Puraka" (inhalation and retention of breath). He taught him also a few sacred mantras, postures viz , Jalandhara and Pranjali, and advised him to practices meditation in those postures. Sri Madiah received Subbaraya Sharma's blessings and returned to Biligiriranga's hills.

During the seven or eight years preceding his retirement, Subbaraya Sharma was not able to devote sufficient attention to his yoga and spiritual activities, like Pranayama and meditation, as he was saddled with various other activities like the writing of books, getting them printed and attending to his duties as a Government servant, not to mention his responsibilities as a householder.

Luckily, however, in the year 1939, he retired from Government service, and was free to devote his time to spiritual practices. He was anxious to live all alone by himself in meditation and the practice of Yoga. About this time, his son-in-law, Sri Venkataramaiah, was senior operator in the Hydro Electric Generating Station at Shivasamudram. As the Electric Colony at Shivasamudram was an isolated place with small groups of houses, and as it afforded a congenial resort for quiet meditation, Subbaraya Sharma went there to practice contemplation and yoga. The other members of his family remained in Bangalore. In point of fact, fifteen years prior to this, he had started living on just one meal a day, giving up all spices and taking instead, Sathwic food. He stayed in Shivasamudram for two years taking just milk, and doing intense meditation.

At this time, one Shri B. Ramadas was Electrical Superintendent, in Shivasamudram. His father viz.. Shri B. Krishnaswamy Iyengar, who was retired Principal of the Engineering College, was a close friend of Subbaraya Sharma. This Krishnaswamy Iyengar came to his son's house at Shivasamudram and stayed there for sometime. Shri Subbaraya Sharma and he used to meet each other

every afternoon. About that time, as it happened to be Rama Navami period, special worship - bhajans, music performances, and other functions - used to be conducted in the Ramanavami pendal at Shivasamudram. One evening, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar took Subbaraya Sharma to a music performance at the Rama Mandali Pendal. They went at about 7 o' clock in the evening, to hear the devotional music that was being sung in the presence of the Deity. While listening to the music, Shri Subbaraya Sharma gradually got into a state of trance, and remained immobile like a wooden image. Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar who was sitting next to him noticed this, but did not disclose it to anybody, lest Subbaraya Sharma should be disturbed. At about 9 o' clock, after the functions were over and everybody had left, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar informed 4 or 5 of his close friends about Shri Subbaraya Sharma's state of trance, and persuaded them to remain there until he became conscious again. Shri Subbaraya Sharma actually awoke from the trance at about 2 o' clock in the night, and was escorted home thereafter by Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and his friends.

Having seen all this and known about Subbaraya Sharma's past experiences, Krishnaswamy Iyengar told Subbaraya Sharma "By the grace of Shri Rama, you have tasted the nectar of heavenly bliss. What need have you for spiritual practices now? Come back with me to Bangalore". Subbaraya Sharma said that he would return to Bangalore after spending 3 to 4 months at Shivasamudram. As Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar was anxious to learn about spiritual matters from Subbaraya Sharma, he persuaded him to return very soon to Bangalore.

## PART III

Shri Subbaraya Sharma returned from Shivasamudram to Bangalore in September 1944. Both Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and Subbaraya Sharma were living in Malleswaram an extension of Bangalore. As Krishnaswamy Iyengar was anxious to listen from Subbaraya Sharma's own mouth to his discourses on the Athman and the other spiritual matters, and with a view to providing facilities for Subbaraya Sharma's meditation and rest during the nights he had a set apart a separate room in the first floor of his house in Malleswaram for Subbaraya Sharma's exclusive occupation. There Shri Subbaraya Sharma spent most of his time.

Shri Subbaraya Sharma and Krishnaswamy Iyengar used to meet at the latter's house before 6 o'clock every evening from then on until about 8 in the night, discourses on Vedanta would go on. Several interested gentlemen used to participate in these discourses. Some of them were for example, Shri V.V. Patankar, Retired Executive Engineer, Shri B. R. Keshava Iyengar, Advocate, Shri M. Ramaswamiah, Accountant of the comptroller's office, Shri K. Shamanna, Chemist of the Industrial & Testing Laboratory, Shri Sundara Rao, Retired Deputy Commissioner, Shri Narasimha Iyengar, Retired Station Master, and various others. The discourses used to begin with a recitation from Shri Subbaraya Sharma's Ramayana. As they were anxious to learn the inner meanings of the Ramayana propounded by Shri Subbaraya Sharma, either Ramaswamy Iyengar or Keshava Iyengar used to read the verses and Subbaraya Sharma would explain their meaning.

Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar's three daughters were well trained in music and also had sweet voices. After the discourses on philosophy, Shri Subbaraya Sharma, Shri Krishna swamy Iyengar, and Krishnaswamy Iyengar's wife viz., Smt. Lakshmi Devi, used to sit and listen to the devotional songs sung by these girls.

On several occasions, Shri Subbaraya Sharma used to go into a trance on listening to this music. Either from a desire to have facilities for peaceful contemplation, or with a view to having rest, Shri Subbaraya Sharma used to spend several nights in Krishnaswamy Iyengar's house and return home only next morning. Mrs. Krishnaswamy Iyengar was a highly devoted lady, deeply interested in philosophy. She too had a natural desire to understand the hidden meaning of the Ramayana which Subbaraya Sharma had propounded. Accordingly, Shri Subbaraya Sharma used to make her read portions of the Ramayana, either in the evening or late in the night, and to explain their meaning to her.

Time used to pass this way. On several occasions, when Shri Subbaraya Sharma, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and Smt. Lakshmi Devi were sitting together, Smt. Krishnaswamy Iyengar used to describe the dreams that she had dreamt on several nights. In one of her dreams, Mrs. Krishnaswamy Iyengar dreamt that she was visiting a lonely place, in the midst of hills, and that in an enclosure there, there was a Basava Image from the mouth of which water was continuously dripping. Close to the Basava was sitting a sanyasin, clad in the robes of a monk. Many devotees were prostrating before him and receiving his ble-

ssings. Mrs. Krishnaswamy Iyengar also prostrated before him, and he gladly blessed her. On another occasion, she dreamt that she was visiting some places where there was a dilapidated fort, and that close to the fort, there was a bund, and on the bund a temple of Devi and that Mrs. Krishnaswamy Iyengar went and saw the Goddess. The tank she saw in the dream was full of water, and the image of the Goddess was taken in a floating procession on the lake. This she said was a splendid sight. In another dream, which occurred immediately before the birth of her son, Ramaprasad, she had a vision of Sri Saradamba, which made her believe that the child was born by that Goddess's blessings. Shri Subbaraya Sharma and Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar used to be surprised at the nature of these dreams. The events in them seemed to have a link with one another and they clearly related to the Sapthamatrikamba temple, which has been described earlier in this book. Subbaraya Sharma wondered what connection there might be between his own experiences and those of another person, wholly unconnected, and utterly ignorant of the events that had taken place. May it be that apparently different lives can have some connection with one another, and that these pieces of a jigsaw puzzle could fit into an understandable pattern, if only one knew how to put them together. This was a mystery still unravelled.

Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyengar and some of his friends used to join together every Sunday in each of their houses by turn, and to perform Bhajan. Sometimes Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar used to take Subbaraya Sharma also to these gatherings. On certain occasions, while listening to

devotional music, Subbaraya Sharma used to attain a state of Samadhi and to remain in that state for hours together. Music indeed helps concentration on God, and in a devout soul, readily brings about a state of Samadhi.

While discussing Smt. Lakshmidevi's dreams, Shri Subbaraya Sharma would point out that these dreams clearly pertained to the very spot where the Sapthamatrikamba temple was located. Shri V.V. Patankar and other friends also agreed that it must be so. Naturally, therefore, all the friends expressed an earnest desire to go in a group to the Theertha Rameswara temple and to the temple of Sapthamatrikamba. A visit to those places was accordingly arranged as soon as the reading of the Ramayana was completed. As these temples were in the midst of forests and as the assistance of local residents, was absolutely necessary before any body could go there, Shri Subbaraya Sharma wrote in advance to the Amildar of Chikkanayakanahalli at the time, Shri S. Chandrasekhariah. This gentleman, though he did not know Shri Subbaraya Sharma personally, heartily welcomed them as he had read Shri Subbaraya Sharma's Ramayana and had great respect for it. He also offered to make all necessary arrangements.

In December, 1946, Shri Subbaraya Sharma, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, Shri V. V. Patankar, Shri B. R. Keshava Iyengar, Shri Ramaswamiah, Shri K. Shamanna, Shri Narasimha Iyengar and some others proceeded from Bangalore to Chikkanayakanahalli and camped in Amildar Chandrasekhariah's house. Shri Chandrasekhariah very kindly agreed to provide the necessary provisions for

a stay of 3-4 days for the entire party in Theertha Rameswara and Sapthamatrikamba temples. As Subbaraya Sharma's name was already well-known in these parts, thanks to the part he had played during the days when Shri Ramananda Swamy was performing Shakti poojas, the leading people from the surrounding areas had also gathered. Among them were Shri Shamanna, Sanskrit Scholar of Handanakere, Shri T. N. Srikantaiah, Professor of Kannada in the University of Mysore and various others.

The same evening an advance party was sent with the necessary provisions in a lorry. Intimation had also been sent to Shanbhog Shri Nanjundiah of Theerthapura, who was no other than the father of Prof. T. N. Srikantiah. Early next morning, the entire party including Subbaraya Sharma, with the Amildar Shri Chandrasekhariah of Chikkanayakanahalli, proceeded in a lorry to Theerthapura and from there walked across to Sapthamatrikamba temple. As Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and other members of the party were anxious to see the very spot which had appeared to Mrs Krishnaswamy Iyengar in her dreams, all of them went to the old fort, overgrown with Shrubs, the image of the Basava with water dripping out of its mouth, and the Sapthamatrikamba temple itself on the tank bund. They were enraptured by the lovely scenery round about, and were surprised at the close resemblance between the area as they saw it with their own eyes, and the spot revealed in her dream to Mrs. Krishnaswamy Iyengar, who had never been there.

Subbaraya Sharma then took a bath and offered worship to Sapthamatrikamba assisted by some members of

the party, like Sri K. Shamanna. The others only witnessed the pooja. At the same time a number of devotees from Chikkanayakanahalli and other places also had gathered. Shri Nanjundiah of Theerthapura was also with the party. The poojas were offered by 11o' clock in the morning, and Shri Subbaraya Sharma remained in a state of meditation at the feet of the Goddess for about a hour; thereafter the others also offered silent prayers. The Pooja over, they all went down behind the bund and offered worship to the Iswara Linga which was being bathed by the water from the Basava's mouth. As food had been prepared in the very spot, all of them joined together and had a hearty re-past. It might be appropriate to record that they were all thankful to Amildar Chandrasekhariah who had made such excellent arrangements.

After food, all of them sat together in the sylvan surroundings, and started discussing about the dreams that Mrs. Krishnaswamy Iyengar had had and about the past happenings, like Shri Ramananda's attempts to propitiate the Goddess with tantric ways of worship, and the way they were put to a stop to with Shri Subbaraya Sharma's timely intervention, of course, with the Goddess's own blessings. They also recollected with sadness, how Shri Nanjundiah's daughter had suffered from loss of wits on account of the service she had rendered to Shri Ramananda. Shri Subbaraya Sharma drew a moral from these happenings and pointed out how true it is that we all have lives before and after the present one, and how every one necessarily reaps the fruits of his actions in previous lives. He also pointed out how the benign grace of God can be secured by Sathwic worship of the deity, abandoning evil

associations and the propitiation of mystic spirits in Tantrik ways. All agreed that there was great truth in what he said.

Shri Subbaraya Sharma did not like to stay with the entire party in the Sapthamatrikamba temple. They therefore returned after a second darshan of the Devi to the Theertharameswara temple by sunset time. No poojas were performed at Theertharameswara temple as the premises had to be cleaned before they could be performed. Sri Handanakere Shamanna who was a great Sanskrit scholar and knew all the verses of the Ramayana by heart, went on reciting the verses, while Sri Subbaraya Sharma explained their inner meaning as expounded in his book. Thus they spent a large part of the night pleasantly and went to sleep.

Immediately he woke up next morning Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar gave an account of the dream which he said he had that night. According to the dream, he i.e.. Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyengar himself and Shri Subbaraya Sharma were brothers in a previous birth, Shri Subbaraya Sharma being the elder of the two. Shri Subbaraya Sharma had received in that earlier birth the Chieftaincy of Sapthamatrikamba from his father-in-law and had made it over to Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, his younger brother who was managing the Chieftaincy with intense faith in Sapthamatrikamba devi. He had felt in the dream that it was as a result of this that he had seven daughters during his present life, and that again he had also dreamt that the only son he had viz., Shri Ramaprasad, was born with the special grace of the same Goddess who had appeared in a

vision to Mrs Krishnaswamy Iyengar (Lakshmi Devi) immediately before his birth. Everybody assembled wondered at the strange coincidence revealed in the dreams, and the way they were corroborated in actual life. They also wondered at the apparently strange but undeniable inter-relationship between different lives.

Next morning they had the temple washed inside and out and Subbaraya Sharma offered worship to Goddess Balarajeswari. Shri Subbaraya Sharma recounted his past experience viz., the Shaktya rites of Ramananda, the mysterious death of Subbaraya Sharma's own children, the vision of Shri Vidyaranya and the benign grace of Goddess Balarajeswari. The recital over, he placed his head at the feet of the image of Shri Balarajeswari and was instantaneously transported to a trance, which lasted for over an hour. During the entire period the others were sitting and silently meditating. They had their food thereafter, Sri Subbaraya Sharma merely taking milk, on which indeed he had sustained himself all the four days. After food when they were all talking together, Shanbhog Nanjundiah produced the sword which Ramananda had previously placed in the hands of the image of the Goddess, and recalled how Shri Subbaraya Sharma had removed it from the Devi's hands and brought it out bandishing, and how Shri Nanjundaiah himself had relieved him of it and hide it in a crevice behind the temple. Shri Subbaraya Sharma had the sword crushed to pieces and buried underground.

When after evening prayers, Shri Subbaraya Sharma was sitting in meditation before the Goddess, Balaraje-

swari, he had a vision of the Goddess in the form of a baby Krishna playing on the flute and saturating the air with blissful joy. The vision spoke and said "Seven hundred years ago, when you were a chieftain in this area, and were following unwholesome ways of worship, beguiled by the preachings of Shakteya guru, Shri Vidyaranya appeared and prayed before me that I may bestow my grace on you and turn you away from those unrighteous ways. As Lord Krishna himself had in one of his Avatars, assumed the terrific form Kali, and as, generations ago, Shakteya was propitiating that form of Godhead with the cruel Krishnakali mantras, and offering human sacrifice, I felt that you deserved to be pardoned for your past sins. I am therefore appearing now before you in this form of a divine child, to bring you bliss. Having said this, the vision vanished.

Shri Subbaraya Sharma spent that night happily in the company of Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and other devotees. They were discussing about various spiritual matters and all of them felt that God is full of bliss, and that salvation is only the attainment of a state of beatitude. They also felt that real devotion to God is another form of intense love, and that such devotion can be reached in a state of joy. As devotion intensifies it brings happiness divine. Shri Subbaraya Sharma explained this to all that had assembled. At this Shri Shamanna, who was a scholar in Sanskrit scripture pointed out that though they had known something about Shri Subbaraya Sharma, and his associations with the temple and the surrounding areas, and had also come to know a few details about Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar's past life, the

were ignorant of the inter relationship between the others who had gathered there. It was then explained by Subbaraya Sharma that whether it was a momentary or a life-long association no two people could come together except on account of some association with each other in the past lives, but that this was too deep a matter for human ingenuity. It was only the Holy Mother Shri Balarajeswari and those inspired by her that could resolve the mystery. In silent reverence, therefore, they all offered prayers to her.

It was arranged that the party should return to Chikkanayakanahalli the next morning, after offering worship to Sri Rameswara and Balarajeswari, but the members of the party expressed a strong desire to remain the whole day in the temple. Moreover Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar was anxious to visit once more the temple of Shri Sapthamatrikamba and offer worship there. So the entire party stayed at Theertharameswara the whole day. Early next morning they got up before sunrise, and after taking their bath offered early prayers to Shri Rameswara and Shri Balarajeswari and proceeded to the Sapthamatrikamba temple. They offered worship to the Goddess and returned to Chikkanayakanahalli, where they were entertained by the Amildar, Shri Chandrasekhariah, who had borne the entire expenses of their stay in his Taluk. This Chandrasekhariah has since retired from service and is leading a pious retired life. He lives in the Jayanagar extension of Bangalore.

After the party returned to Bangalore, Bhajan meetings and discussions on spiritual matters continued as

usual. After three months, some of Shri Subbaraya Sharma's closest friends expressed a desire to go in a party to Shringeri, and have darshan of Shri Sharadamba. In fulfilment of this desire, Shri Subbaraya Sharma went with the entire party in March, 1947 to Sringeri. The party consisted of his pupils, Shri Shamanna, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, his wife and two daughters, Shri Subbaraya Sharma's own daughter and son-in-law and a few others. They stayed in Sringeri for 8 days offering worship to Sharadamba and receiving the blessings of His Holiness. While worshipping Goddess Shri Sharadamba, Shri Subbaraya Sharma used to fall into trans almost everyday. At about 4 o' clock every afternoon, Shri Subbaraya Sharma accompanied by Shri Shamanna, Krishnaswamy Iyengar and others used to see His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swamy. His Holiness used to have discourses on spiritual matters and to clear whatever doubts they had. After spending 8 days in this pleasant manner at Shringeri, the Party returned to Bangalore.

After return again, the usual prayer meetings continued. Remembering the discussions they had during their visit to Theertha Rameswara at which they had all realised that the aim of all faiths is attainment of divine bliss, Sri Shri Subbaraya Sarma had a desire to write a commentary on the Bhakthi Suthras written by Sage Narada. In fulfilment of this desire he wrote a commentary, the purport of which is that the path of devotion (Bhakthi marga) is in tune with and ends in divine bliss. There already are some commentaries on the Bhakthi Suthras of Narada in the Sanskrit, English, Marathi and Telugu languages. Devotees like Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and Sri V.V.

Patankar were anxious to find out how Subbaraya Sharma's own commentaries compared with those other commentaries. They obtained those books and compared them with Subbaraya Sharma's own works, and came to the conclusion that in the elucidation of the abstruse principles embodied in the Sutras, Subbaraya Sharma's book excelled the rest.

Another useful venture of Shri Subbaraya Sharma was the writing of a commentary on the Lalitha Sahasranama. Shri Bhaskararaya has already written a commentary on Lalitha Sahasranama and that is based on Tantric ways of worship. No one has written a commentary on the Lalitha Sahasranama from the Vedic point of view. Subbaraya Sharma, however, condemned Bhaskara's Commentary based on a Tantric interpretation, and wrote his book in accordance with the Vedic principles. This he was able to do by the sheer Grace of the Goddess. Their Holinesses the Swamijis of Sringeri and Dwaraka were greatly pleased with this work, and have expressed appreciative opinions. Mr. A.G Ramachandra Rao (now late) who was formerly Minister of Mysore State and who was also a devotee of Subbaraya Sharma in spiritual matters, and Shri T. Rama Rao, Retired Executive Engineer, greatly assisted Subbaraya Sharma in the Publication of the work. This work and the commentaries on Narada's Bhakthi Sutras were published in 1949. In the introduction to the commentary on the Bhakti Sutras, which is styled "Bhakti Sudharasa", Shri Subbaraya Sharma has recounted his own and Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyengar's experiences in Theertha Rameswara.

Shri Subbaraya Sharma has great respect for His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi of Sringeri. His Holiness, in turn, had great affection for Subbaraya Sharma, partly because he had expounded the inner meaning of the Ramayana, which had not been accomplished even by the sages of the past, and partly because His Holiness felt that Shri Subbaraya Sharma was the recipient of Goddess Balarajeswari's blessing. Naturally, therefore, Shri Subbaraya Sharma had a strong desire to go again to Sringeri and have the Darshan of His Holiness, when one evening the year 1947, he expressed the desire to Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, Shri V.V. Patankar and Shri Shamanna, they all readily agreed. Sri Subbaraya Sharma with his pupil Shri Shamanna, left Bangalore the same night for Shringeri, reaching it next morning.

As Shri Subbaraya Sharma took his bath in the river and was approaching the Shri Sharada temple for a darshan of the Goddess, he saw at the door of the temple His Holiness himself approaching him. He, therefore, prostrated and stood still. Usually Whenever His Holiness met Subbaraya Sharma, he would start the conversation with an enquiry about his health. On this occasion, however, His Holiness, stood silently for a couple of minitues gazing at Shri Subbaraya Sharma with a smile on his face. As it would be inappropriate for a devotee like Subbaraya Sharma to stare back when His Holiness was looking at him, he bent his head and stood still in an humble posture. His Holiness just uttered the word "afternoon" and proceeded further.

At 4 o' clock that afternoon, Subbaraya Sharma went to have an interview with His Holiness along with Shri Shamanna. His Holiness offered a seat close to himself

and asked Subbaraya Sharma "What were you doing yesterday?" Subbaraya Sharma did not know at first what reply to give. After a moment's reflection, however, he replied that he was anxious to have a darshan of His Holiness and that as his mind was preoccupied with this idea the whole of that day, it was practically in Sringeri itself and that only his body was in Bangalore. His Holiness replied with a significant smile on his face - "Yes, from yesterday afternoon, I have been remembering you ten to fifteen times. The night before, after the usual pooja, I was perusing your Ramayana, and was so absorbed in it that I kept reading it until early morning. I was surprised that so soon after this, I should be seeing you in person. The point is, your mind and mine seem to have met at the time. Thought has immense powers, But we must cultivate the habit of directing it in the right direction. Though you were in Bangalore and I remained in Shringeri, we could exchange ideas mentally". With these words he explained the immense and unknown powers of the mind to Shri Subbaraya Sharma and Shamanna. They stayed at Sringeri for two days and returned to Bangalore.

It may not be inappropriate to record a few more incidents in the life of Subbaraya Sharma. Once in the course of a visit to Mysore, along with his friend Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, Sri Subbaraya Sharma was interviewed by Shri Yagneswar Shastrigal, son of late Mahamahopadhyaya Veerupaksha Shastrigal. The Shastrigal brought to the notice of Subbaraya Sharma that Shri Yellambalase Subramanya Sharma, a staunch exponent of the Adwaitha philosophy, had written a book entitled "Moola-vidya Nirasa" and that in this book Shri Subbaramanya

Sharma had propounded the doctrine that originally “Avidya” that is basic ignorance, did not exist. In the course of his book, Shri Subramanya Sharma had agreed against the doctrine of Shri Vidyaranya establishing the existence of Moola Avidya. He had proceeded further to argue that Shri Adi Shankaracharya himself was not the author of the work “Viveka Choodarathna” in which also Shankara has established the existence of Avidya right from the date of creation. This doctrine of Shri Subramanya Sharma had not been accepted either by His Holiness Shri Chandrashekha Bharathi Swamy or by Mahamahopadhyaya Veerupaksha Shastrigal. Despite this, Shri Subbaraya Sharma had ventured to publish the book. It may be mentioned incidentally, that Shri Subramanya Sharma was a learned Scholar in Sanskrit and Indian philosophy and has passed the Vidwath examination. In point of fact of the late Mahamahopadhyaya Veerupaksha Shastrigal was himself the Principal and Professor of Vedantha in the Sanskrit College, and was Subramanya Sharma’s teacher in Vedantha.

Shri Subramanya Sharma and his friend Vedantha Shiromani Vittal Shastri were lecturing about the book “Moolavidya Nirasa” and carrying on propoganda against the existence of original Avidya. Learned Scholars like Mahavidwan Gopalakrishna Sastrigal and Pundit Chandrasekhar Patankar Bhatta Professor in the Maharaja’s College, Shri Kavi Narasimha Bhatta of Sringeri had written books denouncing Shri Subramanya Sharmas’s theory. Moreover Sri Narayana Shastri, who was the Professor of Adwaitha in Maharajas’s Sanskrit College was also delivering a series of lectures denouncing Shri Subramanya Sharma’s

arguments. Shri Yagneswara Shastri complained to Shri Subbaraya Sharma that, despite all this informed propaganda, the flaws in Subramanya Sharma's doctrines had not been effectively brought out, and that therefore Shri Subramanya Sharma and Sri Vittal Shastri were proclaiming that their interpretation was the correct one, and were not only distributing pamphlets to this effect, but were also delivering a series of lectures. Shri Yagneswara Shastri therefore requested Sri Subbaraya Sharma to write a rejoinder to Shri Subramanya Sharma's work.

On hearing this, Shri Subbaraya Sharma said in all humility that while Shri Subramanya Sharma and Shri Vittal Shastri were well known scholars who had passed the highest examination in Sanskrit and Vedan̄tha and were also recipients of titles for rare scholarship in their fields by established Institutions, he himself was neither a scholar, nor had he passed any examination and that he did not, therefore, have the ability to meet the arguments of such stalwarts. Moreover he was by nature averse to denouncing any person, however wrong he might be. He, therefore declined to undertake the work. Sri Yagneswara Shastri, however, persisted in requesting Shri Subbaraya Sharma to write a rejoinder, telling him that as he was a deep devotee of the Goddess, an inspired rejoinder from him would certainly bring home to Subramanya Sharma the mistake he had committed and the entire controversy would then be laid to rest. As Shri Subbaraya Sharma still remained unconvinced, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar stepped on the scene and requested that as his intimate friend and the son of Mahamahopadhyaya Virupaksha Shastri was himself making repeated requests, he should not decline

them, and that he should make an attempt to write a rejoinder as soon as he returned to Bangalore. Accordingly, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar collected all the literature on the subject before returning to Bangalore. On his return, Shri Subbaraya Sharma studied the literature in detail, both for and against the point in controversy, and wrote a small booklet, in simple language, covering about 25 pages entitled "Moola Avidya Samarthana". In this small book Shri Subbaraya Sharma traced the history of the creation of the Universe, its existence and its ultimate annihilation, and the history of human life itself, from the time it first began until each individual soul passes through several cycles of births and deaths, and it attains salvation and pointed out how from the beginning, original Avidya has existed. He also cited authorities from the Upanishads in support of this. The manuscript of this work was sent to Sahithya Rathna Sri Gopalakrishna Shastry at Mysore. Sri Gopalakrishna Shastri and Sri B.Ranganna went through the book, and were immensely pleased, as they realised that inspiration derived from the Goddess is of far greater importance than mere scholarship. They published the book themselves, and after it was printed arranged a gathering of scholars in the Sanskrit College which both Shri Subramanya Sharma and Vittal Shastri were invited to attend. Shri Subbaraya Sharma's work was publicly read in the assembly, and Shri Subbaraya Sharma's mistake was cleared. After this, the controversy ceased.

About the year 1951, Shri Subbaraya Sharma's health started deteriorating. He was then 70 years old. From his 48th year onwards, he was regularly devoting sometime

to spiritual practices and meditation, and at the same time was working in a Government office for his livelihood. A large part of the night used to be spent by him sleeplessly, writing books. For the successful accomplishment of one's worldly activities, some amount of sturdiness of body is required, and one has to possess a certain amount of physical stamina. For the practice of spiritual attainments however, what is required is light and gentle body, with intellectual or spiritual strength. At the final stages of meditation and contemplation, in particular, what is required is a pure Sathwic frame of mind (i.e., spiritual temperament) devoid of body consciousness and with a minimum of physical strength. Shri Subbaraya Sharma's routine on the other hand, was alternating between worldly activities and meditative practices. His physique therefore began to grow weak. In point of fact he was anxious to intensify his spiritual practices and to attain a lasting stage of meditative aloofness. But on account of the weakness of his body, this could not be achieved. Moreover, a few days earlier, when he had been to Sringeri, His Holiness Sri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swamy had advised him to stop meditative practices, as they were no longer necessary for him. Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar reminded him of this. Subbaraya Sharma, therefore, stopped intense meditative practices thereafter.

It will not be inappropriate at this stage to recall a few instances illustrating how Subbaraya Sharma's spiritual influence had spread. He was continuing discourses on religion and spiritual matters in Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar's house. In the beginning of the year 1952, a gentleman called K. S. Balaksrishnappa came to interview

Subbaraya Sharma. This Balakrishnappa was in Kalkere village in Malur Taluk, which is about 23 miles from Bangalore. Sri Balakrishnappa and his wife Lakshmi-devamma had come to Bangalore with the express purpose of seeking spiritual enlightenment and guidance from Subbaraya Sharma. With this object, they had engaged a house in Bangalore and had proposed to live in it under Subbaraya Sharma's direct spiritual tutelage. They also invited Shri Subbaraya Sharma to visit their own place Kalkere.

As Subbaraya Sharma was not entertaining such request except after consulting Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, he went to that gentleman with Balakrishnappa and explained the position to him and the other devotees that had assembled there. They all appealed to Shri Subbaraya Sharma to fulfil Shri Balakrishnappa's request to visit Kalkere, and thereafter to seek the guidance of Shri Sharadamba and act according to the light received from her. Subbaraya Sharma agreed. A visit to Kalkere was accordingly fixed for the 6th day thereafter, and Shri Balakrishnappa took Shri Subbaraya Sharma to his place on the appointed day. That day happened to be a Thursday, and Shri Balakrishnappa and Subbaraya Sharma arrived in Kalkere at about Sun-set time. The next morning i.e., Friday, Shri Balakrishnappa and his wife Lakshmidevamma explained the circumstances in which they were seeking spiritual guidance from Subbaraya Sharma. At this, Subbaraya Sharma queried how they came to know about him. The following is a purport of their reply.

"We have five daughters, and three sons. Of the

three sons the eldest was named Subbaramu. He was 22 years old, the second boy named Dakshina Murthy, was 17 years old ; and the third son, Krishnamurthy was 15 years. As Kalkere had no High School, at the time we sent our second and third sons viz., Dakshina Murthy and Krishnamurthy to their maternal uncle (i.e., elder brother of Smt. Lakshmidevamma), Thammiah in Channapatna. Dakshinamurthy was in the 6th form and Krishna Murthy in the 4th form at the time. Dakshinamurthy, though young in years, had immense faith in God and was interested in philosophical and religious pursuits.

A few days ago Dakshinamurthy had fever. As the fever continued unabated for 8 days, Thammaiah wrote to me about it. Immediately my wife Lakshmidevamma went to Channapatna. By the time Smt. Lakshmidevamma reached Channapatna, the fever had lasted thirteen days. As it was diagnosed to be typhoid, the Doctor said that it might continue for a period of 21 days. After Lakshmidevamma's arrival in Channapatna, a second letter was sent to me (i.e., Balakrishnappa) advising me of my son's condition. My wife, Smt. Lakshimidevamma was going to the temple of Gangadareswara which was close by her brother's house in Channapatna and was offering prayers for her son's recovery. Surprisingly she used to see the figure of her son Dakshinamurthy in the Linga of God Gangadharswara. She wondered why every time she went there, Dakshinamurthy's image was visible in the Linga. Shortly I also went to Channapatna. It was then the 20th day of Shri Dakshinamurthy's fever. Dakshinamurthy passed away on the 21st day, and before dying he folded his hands and addressed his mother with the words "I was born

your son by the grace of Shri Gangadhareswara, and him I am re-joining". With these words on his lips he died.

On the 12th day after Shri Dakshinamurthy developed fever, his younger brother, Krishnamurthy had also developed fever. This also turned out to be typhoid, and he also died on the 4th day after Dakshinamurthy's death. This sudden death of two of our sons was a shock to both of us. When we were thus immersed in sorrow, Dakshinamurthy appeared to his mother Lakshmidevamma in a dream and said - "Why do you grieve, my mother? Nothing in this world is permanent. Who are you and who am I? What is the relationship between us? The thought that you are my mother and I your son, is only a result of ignorance. It is foolish to think that you and I are mother and son. To attain salvation, pursue spiritual knowledge." He appeared in a dream to his father Balakrishnappa also and repeated the same words.

Even after their return from Channapatna to Kalkere, the parents could not overcome their grief. Therefore Dakshinamurthy appeared again in a dream to his mother and said - "You have still not got over the bonds of attachment. Get rid of them. Shortly you will get a spiritual teacher. Learn about spiritual matters from him and save yourself." Lakshmidevamma told this to her husband. They were both wondering who the teacher was whom they were going to have. It happened that a merchant of Bangarpet called Ramalinga Shetty was a close friend of Shri Balakrishnappa. Shri Ramalinga Shetty was celebrating Ramanavami festival in Bangarpet on a grand scale for 9 days and had invited Shri Balakrishnappa and

his wife to attend the celebrations. This Ramalinga Shetty had also invited to the celebrations one Mrs. Manikyamma, a relation of his, who was wife of Advocate Kusuma Subbaraya Shetty of Bangalore. It further happened that this Kusuma Subbaraya Shetty and his wife Manikyamma had got great respect for Shri Subbaraya Sharma from a very long time. Shri Kusuma Subbaraya Shetty had formerly been suffering from Asthma. Shri Subbaraya Sharma had taught him certain yogic practices by observing which he had got completely cured of the trouble. This also became his initiation to spiritual practices, which he had regularly kept up. He and his wife Manikyamma were deeply pious and devoted. Smt. manikyamma had a sweet voice and used to sing devotional songs in the Ramothsava celebrations. In the course of a casual conversation, Smt. Manikyamma had told Shri Balakrishnappa and his wife Lakshmidevamma that Sri Yedathore Subbaraya Sharma, author of "The inner Meaning of Ramayana" was her own and her husband's spiritual Guru.

After returning to his own place, Shri Balakrishnappa consulted his wife about going to Bangalore and requesting Subbaraya Sharma to give them spiritual guidance. It has already been recounted that Shri Balakrishnappa had come and stayed for a day in Bangalore. That very night when Balakrishnappa stayed in Bangalore, Smt. Lakshmidevamma, had a dream in which her deceased son, Dakshinamurthy. appeared to her, and gave her a description of Subbaraya Sharma's features. In fact she saw a living figure resembling Subbaraya Sharma. Dakshina Murthy had pointed out the figure and told her that

that would be her Guru, and that in four to five days he would be coming over to Kalkere. He had asked her to respect this Guru and to prostrate at his feet with faith and confidence and had assured her that she would be saved by his guidance. Moreover, the same day Balakrishnappa's son-in-law Shri Lakshminarayana had a similar dream in which Dakshinamurthy appeared and gave a description of Subbaraya Sharma's features and advised him to seek the teachings of this Guru by which he would be rid of all sins. Next morning when the mother-in-law and son-in-law were wondering at the similarity of the dreams each of them had had, Shri Balakrishnappa returned from Bangalore having met Subbaraya Sharma and gave an account of his meeting with Shri Subbaraya Sharma and a description of his figure and features, which tallied in every detail, with the description given in their dreams. They were all struck with wonder at this coincidence.

These were the circumstances in which Shri Balakrishnappa and Lakshmidevamma were led to seek Shri Subbaraya Sharma's guidance. After the death of their two younger sons, they had recalled their eldest son, Subbaramu to their own place, making him give up further studies. The son-in-law Lakshminarayana was also residing in the same house. After deep consideration of the request of Shri Balakrishnappa and Lakshmidevamma for spiritual guidance, Subbaraya Sharma felt that it would not be proper to make them come over to Bangalore giving up management of the family property. He, therefore, kindly offered to proceed to Kalkere himself as soon as circumstances permitted for a spell of 10-15 days at stretch and give them suitable guidance in spiritual practices and

the ways of meditation. On the first visit, however, Shri Subbaraya Sharma stayed just for two days at Kalkere and returned.

On returning to Bangalore, he gave an account to Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar and other associates of what had happened. They all agreed that the proper course for him would be to go to Kalkere and give them the guidance they needed. It was decided that Subbaraya Sharma should go to Kalkere for a period of 10-12 days, once in 2 months or so, and stay with Balakrishnappa's family, explaining spiritual matters and giving them guidance. At this stage, Shri Balakrishnappa had another calamity, when his daughter Sharadamma, who was just 31 years old, lost her husband. At this Sharadamma did not have any children, she too turned towards other worldly pursuits. Balaktishnappa's eldest son Subbaramu, though just 22 years old, was interested in the knowledge of the Athman and the self. It was therefore agreed that all of them should become Subbaraya Sharma's pupils in philosophical and spiritual pursuits. They began with the reading of the sacred book, Ramayana, taking Subbaraya Sharma's own work on its Inner Meaning as the key. The Son-in-law, Lakshminarayana, or the son Subbaramu would begin reading a portion of the work and Subbaraya Sharma would explain its apparent meaning and the real inner significance, with such practical examples as to make the meaning clear to all of them. They used to read over and over again the books - "Inner meaning of Ramayana", "Significance of Sandhya", the "Shri Saraswathi Mahime" and the commentary on "Lalitha Sahasranama Bhashya". The instruction was thus clear and intensive.

One year passed like this. About this time, Shri Subbaraya Sharma came to know of a strange thing. One night, when Subbaraya Sharma was sleeping in Balakrishnappa's house at Kalkere, Balakrishnappa's eldest son (now the only son) Subbaramu, was sleeping by him. All of a sudden this Subbaramu started speaking deliriously in sleep. Subbaraya Sharma woke up and touched Subbaramu's body and woke him up, and asked him why he shouted in a frightened manner when he was asleep. After some time he asked him to go to sleep again. Neither Subbaraya Sharma nor Subbaramu could sleep. Both of them were lying awake on their beds. When they were thus lying, Subbaraya Sharma sawt he form of a man appearing before him. Subbaraya Sharma accosted the figure and asked him who he was, to which the figure replied in a gruff voice, "I am the brother of Subbaramu, the same Krishna Murthy that died in Channapatna, now appearing in the form of a ghost, and I have entered the body of Subbaramu. Generarations gone by, this Balakrishnappa had done great in justice. He had knocked off all my p roperty and had left me in great distress. In revenge I vowed to destroy this Balakrishnappa's entire family. I was, therefore, born as his son. I will abide my time and take Subbaramu's life. As he is the only surviving son, my object of exterminating Balakrishnappa's family will then be gained". The spirit added "As soon as you touched the body of Subba Ramu, I realised that you were a scholarly and saintly person. Therefore, I am humbly appearing before you. In a life gone by, I was worshipping Goddess Chamundeswari, and am therefore all powerful". Having said this, apparition disappeared.

Subbaraya Sharma thought over it in detail and decided not to disclose what had happened to Shri Balakrishnappa or his wife, lest it should startle them. But at the same time he was silently bestowing his blessings on Subbaramu, wishing him to prosper. Before returning to Bangalore after that visit, he obtained the horoscope of Subbaramu and brought it with him. Needless to say, he related his experience in Kalkere to Krishnaswamy Iyengar immediately after his return to Bangalore.

Surprisingly enough it happened that a few days later, this Subbaramu who was repairing their house in Kalkere, fell from the roof and swooned. As he did not regain consciousness for a long time, Lakshmidevamma was greatly afraid, and was grieving. While thus immersed in grief, and in a state of semi-consciousness she had a feeling that Shri Subbaraya Sharma appeared and touched the body of Subbaramu with his hand. Immediately thereafter, she opened her eyes and Lo ! Subbaramu had regained consciousness ! She promptly sent a message to Bangalore to report this to Subbaraya Sharma. Subbaraya Sharma and Krishnaswamy Iyengar consulted among themselves about these happenings and felt that as the ghost that was harassing Subbaramu's life was not an ordinary one, but was that of Shaktheya Brahmin, who had worshipped Chamundi and received the favours of the Goddess, it would not be easy for an ordinary charmer to exercise this powerful ghost. They decided that this spirit had to be chased away by gentle vedic practices. Subbaraya Sharma examined Subbaramu's horoscope himself, and also had it tallied by his pupil, Advocate Shri Keshava Murthy. Both of them agreed that as some planetary

influences were then harmful to Subbaramu, his own brother Krishnamurthy's ghost had attached itself to Subbaramu with a murderous object, the only way to over come the unsavourable planetary influence would be, they decided to proceed with Subbaramu, to the sacred place of Subramanya near Mangalore, and to offer worship there. As Balakrishnappa had suffered greatly in life and was left with just one son, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, in great sympathy said that he would accompany Shri Subbaraya Sharma to Subramanya and assist him in this good work.

But about the time they had to leave for Subramanya, Shri Krishnaswamy Iyengar's health failed. Subbaraya Sharma had therefore to go alone. He stayed in Subramanya for five days, offering regular worship to God Subramanya. Subbaramu used to sleep during nights by Subbaraya Sharma's side before retiring every night. Subbaraya Sharma used to touch Subbaramu's body with his hand and invoke the blessings of Lord Subramanya. Occasionally, the ghost would appear before Subbaraya Sharma and would tell him - "You are no doubt a great and powerful man ; but I have decided not to leave this brother of mine". But Subbaraya Sharma persisted in his worship of the God, and after completing five days at Subramanya, he came back to Kalkere with Subbaramu. On return he instructed Subbaramu to install some sacred Nagas (Serpent Gods) and advised him to worship them regularly for a period of 48 days (mandala).

The art of driving away evil spirits requires Thanthric worship and practices. But Shri Subbaraya Sharma had decided not to resort to such forms of worship. Moreover His Holiness Shri Chandrasekhara Bharathi Swamy of

Sringeri had also warned him, in the name of the Holy Mother, not to resort to Thanthric Practices. For this reason he sought the assistance of Shri Rama Shastry of Kanakanahalli, who was a great scholar and pundit, and who was well versed in spiritual practices to do what was necessary to drive away this spirit. It may be mentioned incidentally that this gentleman, Kanakanahalli Rama Shastri, had made an intensive study of Subbaraya Sharma's works and had also received spiritual initiation personally from Subbaraya Sharma himself, and was therefore looking upon him as his Guru. He readily concented to do what was necessary to drive away the ghost that had sought refuge in Subbaramu.

At last Subbaraya Sharma offered prayers to the sacred Gurus of the past and to Goddess Sharadamba and then invoked the blessings of the Holy Mother on Shri Subbaramu; the effect of these blessings was felt. That very night, the spirit appeared before Subbaraya Sharma and told him - "You are a great man. Still, I had the vanity that I would be able to attain my object, disregarding you. Now, of course, I cannot enter the body of Subbaramu, as it is sanctified by your blessings. I am afraid even to approach him. Now indeed I have attained self-realisation. Bless me, and pardon my sins". Saying this the Ghost prostrated before Subbaraya Sharma. Until this moment the ghost though it had appeared several times before Subbaraya Sharma had never prostrated before him. Subbaraya Sharma commiserated its plight, and blessed the spirit. He cautioned it that in case it had succeeded in killing Subbaramu, it would indeed be guilty of an unpardonable sin. He blessed the spirit that it

may be born again in better form and attain salvation in due course. The ghost not only prostrated again before Subbaraya Sharma, but also before Shri RamaShastry, and departed for good.

Shri Subbaraya Sharma spent about three months in Kalkere after this event. After explaining the glory of the Ramayana to Balakrishnappa and his family and other interested people in the village, he returned to Bangalore. In the course of his stay at Kalkere, he also explained to the people the meaning of the Bhagavad Geetha and Vivekachoodamani of Shri Shankaracharya. All his disciples in Bangalore were pleased at what he had done at Kalkere.

At Kalkere, Shri Balakrishnappa, Lakshmidevi, their son Subbaramu and daughter Sharadamma and their son-in-law Lakshminarayana in due course acquired deep spiritual knowledge, particularly young Subbaramu and his sister Sharadamma. Lakshmidevamma had developed a keen interest in meditation for the past 8 to 9 years and had sought knowledge in this direction from various pundits. She was requesting Shri Subbaraya Sharma also to guide her in this practice. Subbaraya Sharma then realised that in a previous life, this lady was a yogin and that in that life she had developed intensive meditative powers. He, therefore, initiated her in the practice of contemplation with the "OMKARA" manthra. He had advised her to develop the powers gradually in acute stages. But in her eagerness she overlooked this caution and started intensive practice. After about a year, she had reached the stage of attaining unconsciousness (Samadhi sthithi). As this involved severe strain, her body became weak. Shri Subba-

raya Sharma therefore warned her to suspend the practice for some time after which she was cured of her weakness. Subbaraya Sharma then advised her to give up meditative practices altogether, as she had already realised the Atman and that she should devote the rest of her time to more peaceful contemplation on God. Nevertheless, she was frequently meditating on the self and reaching a state of super consciousness. Subbaraya Sharma initiated Shri Balakrishnappa also in introspective contemplation, and guided him in that path. In due course, Subbaramu got married and had children, and fortunately the family of Shri Balakrishnappa has survived. Subbaraya Sharma used to visit Kalkere at least once every year for about six to seven years from 1952. He has now given it up, on account of age and weakness, as indeed he has given up visiting other places.

Subbaraya Sharma continued his teachings on Vedantha and spiritual practices. A number of interested gentlemen have derived the benefit of these teachings among whom are persons from different avocations like, Government servants, advocates and judges, doctors, and various others.

Sri Krishnaswamy Iyengar, who in a past life, had been born as Subbaraya Sharma's own brother, passed away in the year 1957. This gentleman was one of the most affectionate and respected friends and devotee of Subbaraya Sharma.

Subbaraya Sharma, in addition to his teachings of Vedantha to the students, he wrote a book on the significance of the Thaithreya Upanishad in 1965. It is not an ordinary task to write a book on the inner essence and significance of the Upanishads. No one had attempted it

so far. This book was published by one of his enthusiastic devotee viz., Shri L. Narayana Jois. In 1968, Subbaraya Sharma realised that the authority of the science of Astrology is derived from the Gayathri Manthra, and accordingly, by the grace of Shri Sharadamba, he wrote a work entitled "Gayathri Mahime - Jotisya Shasthra" (origin of Astrology and Astronomy). No such work has been written in India so far in any language. Dr. M. Panduranga Pai who is disciple of Subbaraya Sharma, and is now Principal in the Kasthurba Medical College at Mangalore, got the above book printed and published by the Academy of General Education, Manipal, by the kind help of Shri T. Ramesh Pai. The following books in English have also been printed and published in 1971.

1) The greatness of Devi Shri Sharadamba (The eternality of Veda (Knowledge) and the Veena (Sound), (2) Shri Kundalini Sakthi-Serpent Power, (As per Vedic Text and not Thanthrik), (3) The greatness of Devi Sri Gayathri - Jyothisha Sasthra (Origin of Astrology and Astronomy), (4) Spiritual Significance of Sandhya Karma (rituals), (5) Transmigration of Souls (Pre-Existence of Rebirth) A factual account, and (6) Inner Meaning of Bharatha and Bhagavatha, (The torch leading the path of liberation).

Even now, though he is 89 years, Subbaraya Sharma continues his spiritual teachings to his pupils and also writes scholarly works.

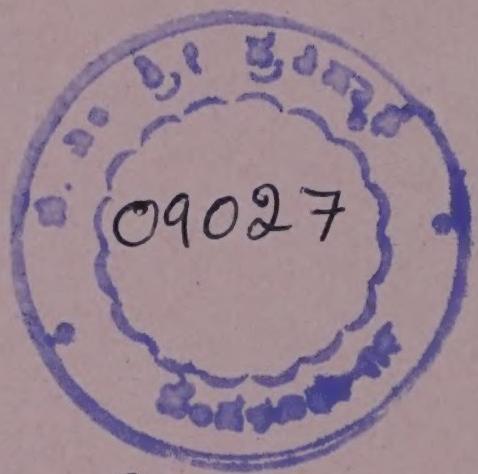
As already stated, he had no desire to leave behind a record of his life, but has been persuaded to give this brief account, yielding to the earnest desire of his friends and devotees.

### NOTE BY THE AUTHORS

Shri Vidyaranya Swamy, appeared and disclosed to Shri Subbaraya Sharma, for the first time in 1918, the fact of his having been born as Pallegar in an early life, and having constructed and established the temples of Shri Rajarajeswari in Theertharameswara village in that earlier life. Nine years later i.e., in 1927, Shri Subbaraya Sharma received inspiration from the Goddess Rajeswari and by her blessings, and those of Shri Vidyaranya Swamy, he wrote a book on the inner significance of the Ramayana. It is evident that the profound significance of Sri Rama's incarnation of his divine story, and of no other incarnation was revealed to Subbaraya Sharma, as he had built the sacred Rameswara Temple in an earlier life, and worshipped in it, with sincere devotion. Similarly as he had received inspiration from Sapthamatrikamba, the Deity installed by his Guru Vidyaranya in an earlier life, the immense greatness of Sharadamba was revealed to him, and accordingly he wrote a book on the significance of the Veena and the greatness of the Gayathri Manthram. Moreover, as Shri Rajeswari had appeared to him in the form of child Gopalakrishna, Shri Subbaraya Sharma was inspired to write about the inner meanings of the Maha-bharatha and the Bhagavatha. These facts provide evidence of how one's doings during a particular life time influence his conduct and actions in future lives.

No such works on the profound significance of the Ramayana or the interpretation of Maha Bharatha. The Bhagavatha or on the greatness of Sharadambha have been written, either in Sanskrit or in any language in India so far. Shri Subbaraya Sharma's works are the first of their kind in India. Similarly, no scholar in India has attempted to write about how the science of Astrology and





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